

A  
CONTRITE  
AND  
HUMBLE  
HEART;

WITH  
Motives and Considerations to  
prepare it.



MDCXC VII.

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*Second Edition. Approv'd.*

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P S A L M. L.

*A Contrite and Humble Heart,  
O God, thou wilt not despise.*

I. S A M. VII.

*Prepare your Hearts to God, and  
Serve Him only.*

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TO THE  
READER.

**T**HE Subject which I treat of, is  
the best of Hearts; a Contrite  
and an Humble One. A Heart  
which is the Price of Heaven. An inesti-  
mable Jewel, which deserves our selling  
all we have to purchase it. What disad-  
vantages it may have suffer'd in my hand,  
who have prepar'd and fashion'd it accord-  
ing to my Fancy, I pretend not to excuse.  
As rough and as unpolish'd as it is, the  
Jewel is entire; the interiour value of it  
is the same within it self, and that's abun-  
dantly sufficient to atone for all. Besides,  
Contrition and Humility affect not the  
advantage of a Modish Outside; plain  
Sincerity becomes them infinitely more.  
An humble Penitent, who has an angry God  
to please, and trembles under his Almighty  
Hand, has something else to think of.  
When a Magdalen once comes with peni-  
tential Tears to bathe her Saviour's feet,

## To the Reader.

*she quite forgets her Looking-glass; and comes without consulting it. She brings her precious Ointments with her, but these are only for her Lord: They are not, either to adorn her self, or please the Company.*

*The Method I have follow'd, may perhaps seem arbitrary, & require a line or two to justify it. I begin with the Love of God. 1. Because it is the First, the Greatest, and indeed the Whole Duty of Man. 2. Because although the Practice of Repentance commonly begins with Fear, goes on with Hope, and ends in Love; yet where our Practice ends, our Theory begins; and what is last perform'd, is generally first design'd, and principally aim'd at. 3. Because there is no ground for either Hope or Fear, before we Know our Duty. When we know it, and consider well how little we observe it; then it is that we begin to tremble at the thought of our appearance at the Bar: The Terrour of a Living God awakens us, and makes us sensible, how fearful a thing it is to fall into his hands. For this Reason, in the second place I shew the general Motives of our Fear: Which, to prevent despair, I counterballance with the Motives of*

## To the Reader.

of our Hope: And, after all, because Presumption is the greater danger of the two, (our Pride inclining us to think Repentance easie, and our Self-Love daily tempting to defer it,) therefore I have taken care to shew the Danger of Delay. These Preparations I thought proper for a Contrite and an Humble Heart.

When I describe Contrition, I enlarge much more upon the Resolutions of Amendment, than the Sorrow due to Sin: because these Resolutions are commonly the more neglected of the two. A little Melancholy, or a little Tenderneſs of Nature, with no more than meerly Self-Love in the Case, may oftentimes produce a sensible concern, and even Tears, when we reflect upon the danger we are in: Though all this while, our darling Humours, our beloved Sins, are every jot as dear to us as ever. Some slight Thoughts we have, in general, of doing so no more: But these are only superficial: They produce not a sincere and hearty Detestation of our Crimes: They are to God, what our Compliments are to our Neighbours; these are Words of course, and those are Thoughts of course; both signifie just nothing.

## To the Reader.

*These two Sections of Contrition\**  
\* 91. have been printed apart by One who  
sign'd the Paper as his Act and Deed;  
inviting others to take pen in  
Intr. par. hand, and do the same. I sign  
I. ch. 21. it not with my Hand; but  
only wish, my Reader and my  
self may sign it with our Hearts.

In the first four Sections of Humility  
I offer little or nothing of my own. It  
would not have become me to pretend to  
much acquaintance with so rare a Virtue.  
And besides, in such a Matter, so extreme-  
ly disagreeable to our Corrupted nature,  
there was need of more Authority than  
mine.

I Conclude with the Character of a  
Good Christian. Having describ'd his  
Heart, I thought it would not be amiss to  
finish the remainder of his Character. In  
this also, I advance not a word of my own.  
Should I Presume to draw a Christian to  
the Life, 'twould be in me as great a Va-  
nity, as if my Reader should pretend to sit  
for the Picture. I produce the Scripture  
chiefly, and the Fathers; now and then  
a Modern Author: Any helping Hand was  
welcome in so difficult a Piece.

No matter Who I am. I am a Son of the  
Church; and submit my self entirely to  
Her.

## To the Reader.

*Her. \* My Name is CHRISTIAN, and my Surname \* S. Pacian CATHOLICK; the rest B. of Bar-I have leave to conceal. God's celone. Honour and my Neighbour's Good is all I aim at; And as to either of these Designs, I have no other Name, but what is altogether useless.*

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**I**N this Edition I have alter'd nothing but the last Section of Humility, in which I have omitted three Articles. I was advis'd to it by a Friend; and would not argue the matter with a Person whom I have so much reason to think wiser than my self. As to my own judgment, I am still of a contrary opinion; and should not have so easily submitted, had I not reflected that I ought to practise the Humility I preach.

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MOTIVES  
OF  
LOVE.

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S E C T. I.

*How much it imports us to Love God  
above all Things.*

**W**HEN the Pharisee askt  
our Saviour, *Mat. 22. 36.*  
*What is the great Com-*  
*mandment in the Law?*

Our dear Redeemer, who came to perfect the old Law, who came to change the Law of Fear into a Law of Love, who brought down fire from Heaven to enflame our hearts, reply'd, *ver. 37, 38.*  
*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy Mind. This is the Great Com-*  
*mandment.*

I fear that many of us little think how *Great* it is. We little reflect on the one side how great our *Obligations* are to Love our God ; and on the other side, how great are the *Advantages* which cannot fail to attend this Love. We little consider how great our *Ingratitude* is, if we omit our *Greatest Duty* ; how great our *Folly* is, if we neglect our *Greatest Good*.

## S E C T. II.

*That the Love of God is our Greatest Duty.*

**T**O make it plainly appear that the Love of God above all things is the *Greatest Duty* of a Christian, one would think it were enough to shew, that 'tis a Duty which comprises all our other Duties ; that it is the Total Sum of Christianity ; and that without the least hyperbole, it is the *Whole Duty of Man* ; because all other Precepts whatsoever, only are so many Branches of this *Great Commandment*, which is the Root of all the rest. St. Cyprian calls it the *Grand Epitome* of all our Obligations. And were it necessary, it were easie to demonstrate, that

Serm. de

Orat. Domin.





as God is therefore infinitely Perfecter than all his Creatures, because He really contains in his own Essence all Perfections whatsoever; so our *Obligation* to love him is incomparably greater than all other obligations, because it eminently comprehends them altogether.

This is enough to give us a confus'd Idea of our *Duty* at a distance. If we draw the prospect nigher, we shall find an infinite variety of pressing Motives which enforce our obligation. Every single Excellency of the Object we adore is all divine: No shadow thereof any blemish to obscure those Charms which challenge our Affection: Nothing in our God but what is infinitely amiable, and deserving infinitely more than *All* the Love that we are able to return. Since therefore All and every one of his innumerable Excellencies are unlimited and boundless; since they All and every one deserve a suitable Esteem, since they command our Love as much as they deserve it: hence it follows clearly, that our *Duty* is as boundless as their Merit; and that, as St. Bernard says, *There is no other Measure of our Love, than Loving without Measure.*

Amongst the numberless variety of those divine Perfections, which *the Eye has not seen, nor the Ear heard, nor have enter'd into the Heart of any Man;* 1 Cor. 2.9. there is one which we are more acquainted with; there's one which in a manner makes the rest our own; and which of all is the most apt to make a sensible impression in a generous Heart; I mean that of a *True Friend*. We read in *Ecclesiasticus, 6.15.* that *there is nothing comparable to a True and Faithful Friend*: and that in the balance of the Wise, *He weighs much more than all the Gold and Silver in the world.* As there is nothing better upon Earth than a *True Friend*, so there is nothing more pretended to. And as the World deceives us most, where we expect it least, so there is hardly any thing in which it more deceives us, than in this. Of all that read these lines, perhaps there is not one who has not been already very much mistaken in a *Friend*: and 'tis no wonder if we always are so, till we raise our hearts above this world, and fix them there, where we are sure to find a *True and Faithful One*; who *Loves us gratis; always Lov'd us; Lov'd us even when we were his Enemies*; and will  
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for all Eternity continue the same Love, unless we prove *ungrateful*, and refuse to Love Him above all things, as He very well deserves.

He Loves us *gratis*: Not for any Good He gains by it, or any little Service we can do him. He cannot stand in need of any of those Goods, which every moment He bestows upon us. *Thou art my God*, says the Psalmist; *Psal. 16. 2. My Goodness extends not to Thee.* When we have done all we can, *Luke 17. 10. we are unprofitable Servants*: We have done our selves the greatest good we can imagine, but our God is not a jot the better for't. *Lib. 10. The Fountain*, says St. Austin, *de Civ. is not better for our drinking at the Stream, nor the Sun the better for our walking by his Light.* If I may use St. Paul's expression, *2 Cor. 12. 14. He seeks not what is Ours, but Us.* He seeks for nothing but our Love, and even this Command he lays upon us meerly for our Good: *Deut. 10. 12, 13. And Now*, says He, *what does thy Lord thy God require of thee, but to Love Him with all thy Heart; which I command thee, this Day, for thy Good.* Behold, dear Christians, a True and Faithful Friend! and see

See how you can answer it to your Good Nature, if you do not Love Him.

He *always* Lov'd us; always thought of us; not only all of us in general, but every one of us; and Lov'd us with a Love Eternal as Himself. He says, in the Prophet *Jeremy*, Ch. 13. 3. *I have Lov'd Thee, with an Eternal Love; therefore with loving Kindness have I drawn Thee.* And what more powerful Attractive can there be to draw us to Him, than that *Loving Kindness* which from all Eternity took care of our Concerns, contriv'd our future Happiness, and drew a Scheme of all the necessary means to bring us to it. Except himself, He hardly thought of any thing but Us; our first Creation, our Redemption, our Salvation, were always in his Eye; they were the Eternal Entertainment of his Mind; they were the Great Design which gave occasion to the first Production of this World, which we ungratefully prefer before Him, though He made it for us. *Eccl. 9. 14. Never forsake your Old Friend, your New one will never be like Him.* Alas! who can help it, if we will be so ungrateful, and forsake so ancient a Friend? we may be sure it is impossible to find a New one comparable to him. He

He Lov'd us, even when we were his *Enemies*. 'Tis true, the first Production of the Universe was proof enough; and no Man can deny, but that so great a Gift bestowed upon us for our Use, abundantly sets forth the Greatness of his Love. But yet the whole Creation of the World is nothing to the constant Conservation of it for our sakes, who have so long so much abus'd it. If the first bestowing of a more than ordinary favour, without any previous merit on our side, be such an argument of more than ordinary Love, what is the constant repetition and continuation of the Same so long a time, although the longer we enjoy it, we demerit more and more, and are as *obstinate* in our *Ingratitude* as He is *constant* in his *Kindness*? Was there ever any *true* and hearty Love like this! St. Paul expresses some resemblance of it in a second Letter which he writes to the *Corinthians*, and declares his readiness to serve them, 1 Cor. 12. 15. *though* (says he) *the more abundantly I love you, the less I am lov'd.* We read it in the 12th Chapter, which relates his Rapture into the third Heaven: and without all doubt this Love of his was copied there from the divine Original.

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If one small Spark of this Celestial Love had such a wonderful effect in the Apostle's breast; What can we say or think of that immense and boundless Fire of Everlasting Love, which no Ingratitude of Man was ever able to extinguish! Though our God foresaw how much it was in vain to court our Love, although He was not ignorant that his Affection for so base and so unworthy Creatures would be more despis'd the more he labour'd to endear us to him; though he knew before-hand the unparallell'd Ingratitude of Man; Nevertheless he sent his only Son to save us, He could not hold his hand, he could not deny himself the satisfaction of being infinitely Kind. *Be astonisht, O ye Heavens, at this! Jer. 2. 12.*

St. John, discoursing of this Love, takes notice of no other motive of it than our *Gratitude*; our indispensable Obligation to be Grateful to so Good a Friend. We Love him, says he, *because he first Lov'd Us*, 1 Jo. 4. 19. He does not say, because He's infinitely Good and Perfect in himself, but because he has been infinitely Good and Kind to us. His Reason I gather from the 12th v. of the same Chapter, where He says, *No man*

man has seen God at any time; and the 20. where he adds, *How can a man Love God, whom he has not seen?* If we had ever seen him *Face to Face*, 1 Cor. 13. 12. as all the Blessed Spirits do in Heaven, we should then have lov'd Him *here* as they do *there*; The very *Sight* of Him (although he never had been Kind) would have transported us beyond all thoughts of any thing but him; it would have been impossible to entertain the least impression of any other Love, in Competition with him. But because this Happiness is not to be expected here, where 'tis impossible to see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3. 2. Therefore S. John the Disciple whom JESUS Loved, Jo. 21. v. 7. who by experience knew that no impression sinks deeper in a Generous heart, than the indearing Obligation of returning Love for Love, pleads nothing else but *Gratitude* for the fulfilling of this Great Commandment; *We Love him*, says he, *because he first Loved us*, 1 Jo. 4. 19.

There's nothing more obliging than the *Love* of a *True Friend*; and nothing else obliges us without it. Whatsoever the interiour value of a Benefit amounts to, when we cast it up, the Obligation

is not tax'd by any other weight or measure, than his *Love* to whom we stand indebted for it. In this Case, *Ingratitude*, of all Crimes, is the most unpardonable, a Crime so base, which Human Nature so abhors, that even the Worst of Men, who are asham'd of nothing else, can never endure that any Man should either *say* or *think* They are *Ungrateful*. Other sins they publish to the World, but this they always labour to conceal. And though I scarce can think of any Wickedness so infamous but some have been so Wicked as to Glory in it; yet *Ingratitude* is so *Unworthy*, carries so much *Baseness* in the very Front of it, that I could never hear of any that were ever Proud of being thought *Ungrateful*. Rather than a Man should think They are so, they invent a thousand frivolous pretences to disown the Obligation; they quarrel with the Benefit; revile the Benefactor; and that they may deny a *less* Ingratitude they hide it with a *greater*. So asham'd they are to own this fault, that they had rather *be* a thousand times ungrateful than be once *esteem'd* so.

This is the Crime which many of us are so Guilty of, although we are as much *unwilling* to believe it, as we are



are *asham'd* to own it. And one of the most notorious aggravations of our great *Ingratitude* is this; that we not only are so, but are in a manner quite insensible of being so. Because our God is infinitely *more* our Friend than any other can be, Therefore we regard him infinitely *less*. We cannot without indignation observe one man ungrateful to another: *The very Story of an ungrateful Action*, says Seneca, *puts us out of all Patience, and gives us a loathing for the Author of it. That inhuman Villain, we cry, to do so horrid a Thing!* And yet when we observe how horribly ungrateful a poor miserable Creature is to our Creator, we take little notice of it; we regard it with a cold indifference, as if we were content it should be so.

We cannot plead in our defence that we are ignorant how much we stand indebted to him for his Love: Alas! we all know well enough that there was never any Love like his: So *True*, so *Ancient*, and so *Constant*. If we plead Forgetfulness or Inadvertency; twill only make the matter worse by offering to mend it. *He is the most ungrateful of all*, says the Moral Philosopher,  
who

*who Forgets either the Benefactor, or the Benefit.* And yet when we have made the best we can of an ill Cause, 'tis certain that the *true*, if not the only Reason why we are insensible of our *Ingratitude*, is because we seldom call to mind, and almost quite *Forget*, how *Great* our *Obligation* is to love our God, because he first loved us, 1 Joh. 4. 19.

*All the Ends of the World*, says the Psalmist, *shall Remember, and be Converted to God*, Psal. 22. 28. Let us Remember only what a *Friend* God is; how infinitely better than the Best we have besides: Let us Remember only *This*, and we *shall be Converted*: We shall be ashamed of our *Ingratitude*, and *Love him* above all things.

### S E C T. III.

*That the Love of God is our Greatest good.*

**W**HATEVER our *Duty* is, the very word *Commandment* is always odious to those who love their *Liberty*, and makes it so much harder to go down with them. But yet, if after second thoughts upon the matter, we discover that one reason, why it is our *Greatest Obligation*, is because it is our *Greatest Good*; the *Yoke* will then seem  
easy

*easy and the Burthen light. Matt. 11.30.*

Three things there are, which gain our Hearts, command our Inclinations, and in a manner govern all our Actions; and these three things are, *Honour, Profit, Pleasure*. Whatsoever we call *Good*, falls under one of these three Heads; 'tis either *Honourable, Profitable, or Delightful*. All these three accompany the *Love of God*; and none of them are ever to be found without it.

1. To begin with *Honour*: I take for granted, No man ought to judge that *This or That* is *Honourable*, because the Generaliry of Mankind, by mistake, is apt to value and admire it; but before he gives his Verdict, every Man should first consider well the merits of the cause. A Wise Man, though he liv'd amongst a Multitude of Infidels, and saw how much they honour and adore false Gods, he would not therefore presently conclude such Idols *Honourable*; but would rather laugh at those who are so blind as not to see how little *They* deserve it. The Question is not what we (by a vulgar error) are inclin'd to honour most, but What it is that is most worthy of it? And this, upon a strict enquiry, will appear to be the *Love of God*. *Honour*, at all

all hands, is agreed to be, a *Testimony* of some Excellence; and Nothing can be truly honourable, if it be not truly *Excellent*. A man has no just Title to his Honour (any more than what the common Duties of Civility amount to) if he have not something in him more than ordinary, some Perfection to distinguish him, and raise him to a height more elevated than the lowest Rank of men.

The Qualities which justly challenge men's *Esteem*, are *Wisdom*, *Justice*, *Power*, and whatsoever raises us to the Perfection of our Nature. As

2. 2. 9. 47. for *Wisdom*; S. Thomas of  
a. 13. *Aquine* has demonstrated

that no Man can be truly *Wise*, who does not Love God above all things. He may be, says he, a *Wise Merchant*, or a *Wise Pilot*, a *Wise Statesman*, or a *Wise General*; because he may be *Prudent in the choice of proper Means well fitted to the Purpose and Design* of such Employments: But 'tis impossible to be a *Wise Man* without being *Wise in order to the proper end of MAN*, the great Design of his Creation, which is nothing but the Knowledge and the Love of God. A Magistrate, who is created

red meerly for the *Publick Peace*, whatever he may be in other things, if he be not *Wise* in order to *that End*, He is not a *Wise Magistrate*: And since all Mankind was created to be happy in an Everlasting Union with God, Whatever a Person may be in other Affairs, if he be not *Wise* in order to this End, He may be a *Wise What you please*, but he is not a *Wise MAN*.

As for *Justice*, I would gladly know how any Man is throughly and truly *Just*, who is perpetually Guilty of the most notorious injustice we can think of. Such is the Man, who e're he be, that does not *Love* his Maker as he ought. Tis true; He only is unjust to God; he only wrongs himself; he never wrong'd his Neighbour, may be, all his Life. But what would you say of a Steward who *only* cheats his *Master*? Would you think him a just Man, because he never cheats his Fellow-Servants?

As for *Power*: I confess it may be *Great*, in some particular respects, but never can be *Absolute*, without the *Love* of God. I may say the same of *Power*, that St. *Thomas* says of *Wisdom*, A Man without this Love may be a *Powerful Prince*,

Prince, a Powerful Warriour, or the like: because, without it, he may have all Power necessary for the main design of Government, or War, &c. But since without this Love, he neither can Command his Passions, nor himself; 'tis evident he has not all the Power necessary to attain the proper End of Man's Creation: In a word, he is no Powerful Man, who is not Master of himself.

Thus you may plainly see how these three Characters of *Wise, Just, Powerful*, which are the most esteem'd and Honour'd in the World, are only Shadows, and imperfect Semblances, if separated from the Love of God. You plainly see, that it not only is the greatest Excellence of Man, most Honourable, most Deserving our Esteem; but that, without it, there is hardly any thing which truly is so.

2. As it is our Greatest Honour, so it is our Greatest Profit. St. Paul was so sensible of this, that though the Fervour of his Zeal appears in all his Writings, yet he never speaks with greater Emphasis than when he has a fair occasion to discourse upon this subject. *Though I speak, says he, with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity,*

*I am become like sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge; and though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burn'd, and have not Charity; it profits me nothing, 1 Cor. 13.* he has reckon'd up the greatest Gifts, and best Advantages, that he could call to mind; and yet he says, they All are Nothing to our Purpose, without Love. On the other side, the same Apostle teaches us, that all things else are profitable with it, though they never can be so without it. *We know, says he, that all things work together for good, to those who love God, Rom. 8. 28.* The Secret of changing all things into Gold, has in vain, long time been sought for; but the mystery of changing all the meanest of our Actions into more than Gold, is much more easie to be found. *Whatever ye do, says St. Paul, do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31.* and every thing you do, will have more value in his sight, than all the Gold and Silver in the

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World.

**World.** The least Degree of Love, the coldest Act of Charity, even the giving a Cup of cold water, for the love of God, our Saviour tells us, *shall in no wise lose its reward*, Matth. 10. 42. So true is that of St. Austin; *All things else are profitable, with it; Nothing else is truly so, without it.*

3. As it is our *Greatest Profit*, so it is our *Greatest Pleasure*: There is nothing so *Delightful*, even in this World, as to Love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind. 'Tis hard enough, I know, to make the World believe it: Because although the Truth be in it self as clear and bright as the Meridian Sun, our Passions raise a cloudy mist before our Eyes, which intercepts the sight of it. All Persons, whose Affections are fixt upon the Pleasures of this World, can hardly ever be persuaded but that the Love of God is the dullest and the most insipid thing imaginable. They easily conceive, that nothing is so *Honourable*, as to be a Saint; and that it is but a very little Profit for a Man to gain the World, and lose his Soul, Matth. 16. 26. The Honour and the Profit are agreed upon, but where's the  
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the *Pleasure*? All that can be said upon this subject, they are unacquainted with, they understand it not. He preaches in an *unknown Tongue*, who preaches the Love of God to those who never Lov'd him. *The Language of Love*, says St. Bernard, *is barbarous to those who Love not.*

As soon as ever they begin to turn their back upon these rotten Pleasures, and look towards Heaven; presently these Darlings of their Heart begin, as it were, to pull them by *Conf. the sleeve*, as St. Austin words it, *lib. 8.* and whisper in their Ear; Do you forsake us? And from this moment shall we have your Company no more, **FOR EVER?** Shall we **NEVER** see you more? Thus they solicit, thus they importune, and tempt them, to deferr the time of their Conversion. Do you think it possible to live without the Pleasures of this World? Ah Christians! 'Tis not only possible; it is the *Greatest Pleasure* in the world to Live without them. 'Tis true, the very thoughts of Separation are like thoughts of *Death*: But then we ought to reflect, that as we feel no pain when we are *Dead*, but all our pain is only whilst we are in *Dying*: So

we feel the pain of leaving worldly pleasures, whilst we are *Deliberating* what to Do; But we are *Dead*, we feel no pain, at all, when once we are *Resolv'd* upon't. *You are dead*, says St. Paul to the *Colossians*, Col. 3. 3. and your life is hid-  
den with Christ in God. *I am dead*, says the same Apostle to the *Galatians*, Gal. 2. 19, 20. and the life which I now live in the *Flesh*, I live by the *Faith* of the Son of God who lov'd me. See the powerful Effects of Love! It makes us as insensible to all the *Pleasures* of this world, as if our *Inclinations* were already *Dead*, and quite extinguish'd in us. *Cant. 8. 6. Love is as strong as Death.*

'Tis this *Victorious Love* which frees us from the *Tyranny* of all those *Passions*, which divide the *Kingdom* of our Heart: a Kingdom brought to *Desolation*; where *Satan* casts out *Satan*, and how can this Kingdom stand? *Matth. 12. 25, 26.* How is there any true *Content* and *Satisfaction* to be found in it? A Man who places all his happiness in humouring his *Passions*, can never please himself, 'till he has pleas'd them all: And since it is impossible to please two *Masters*, how is it possible for any Man to please so many? I might here appeal to each

each Man's private Conscience for a farther Testimony of this Truth; But, if a Sullen Conscience (even when it is upon the wrack) refuses to confess, we have the word of God, the best and clearest Evidence we can desire: *The Wicked*, says he, *Isa. 57. 20, 21. are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest; whose waters cast up mire and dirt; there is no PEACE,* says my God, *to the Wicked.*

On the other side, when once the Love of God has full possession of our Heart, when Christ Governs it by Faith, and the Holy Ghost by Charity; when the Spirit of God begins to move upon the face of the waters, *Gen. 1. 2.* it presently commands the Winds and the Sea, *Matth. 8. 26.* and there succeeds a great Calm. In a word, as much as Liberty is more agreeable than Slavery, as much as Unity is better than Division, as much as Peace, Content, and Ease, are more Delightful than perpetual Disturbance, Discontent and Pain, so much the Pleasure which attends the Love of God, is Greater than the Pleasures of this world.

Had it been possible for our Creator to oblige us all to Love him gratis, we might then have had more colour for our

Crime. And yet it would have been no more than what he very well deserves. He Lov'd us *gratis*, without any possibility of Recompence: He humbled himself to repair our *Honour*; he quitted Heaven to promote our *Interest*; he suffer'd torments to procure our *Ease*; and it would only be a suitable Return, if we preferr'd his *Honour*, *Interest* and *Pleasure* far before our own. But, as our kind and gracious God has order'd it to our advantage, we are all oblig'd to seek our own true *Honour*, *Interest*, and *Pleasure*, and despise the false appearances of *Honourable*, *Profitable*, and *Delightful*, which the World endeavours to delude us with.

When we have made the most we can of such an Obligation, 'twill amount to neither more nor less than what we daily see before our Eyes. Consider how the Ambitious, the Covetous, and the Voluptuous, love their honours, riches, pleasures: Is it not plain, they love them above all things? And why should not we love God as well as Worldlings love the World? They love it *with all their heart*, they desire nothing else but to enjoy it; *with all their Soul*, they have no passion for any thing else; *with all*

*all their Mind,* they think of nothing else, but how to make a Figure in it. Has God less charms than the World? Or is a Flattering Friend (well known to be our greatest Enemy) more amiable than the best of Friends, most true, most ancient, and most Constant, who has always lov'd us better than we love our selves? Is it a greater honour for a Man to be the Devil's Slave, than be a Favourite of God? Is it a greater profit to be cheated in the End, than be Eternally Rewarded? Or are those Pleasures which are always mixt with intervals of discontent, anxiety, and pain, greater than those Delights which are unchangeable, immortal, and divine; which even in this Vale of Misery begin our Heaven upon Earth? Ah Christians! We have little reason to dispute the terms of such an Obligation, where the whole advantage is entirely on our Side: So great advantage, that we cannot truly love our selves, unless we Love our Lord our God, with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind: *Matth. 22. 38.* This is not only our greatest Duty, but our greatest good.

## S E C T. IV.

*That the Love of God is the chief Grace  
of the Holy Ghost.*

**I** Am come, says our Saviour, to send  
fire on the Earth, Luke 12. 22. and  
what do I desire but that it may be kind-  
led? This he desires; for this he came;  
and this we pray for, in the Service of  
the Church; Come Holy Spirit, fill the  
hearts of thy faithful, and kindle in them  
the fire of thy Love.

The Holy Ghost came visibly at first,  
and prov'd his Presence by the Miracles  
he did. But yet a Spirit is not natural-  
ly sensible; and when he comes invis-  
ibly, he comes more like himself; nor  
have we any reason (when he dwells  
within us) to suspect that he is less at  
home, because he less appears abroad.  
Although we do not see the fire descend,  
and rest upon our heads; yet if the Love  
of God enflame us, if it burn within our  
hearts, if it appear in our Devotion, in  
our Conversation, in our Actions, 'tis  
enough, we then may hope we have re-  
ceiv'd the Holy Ghost, and that our Sa-  
viour verifies in us his Promise, which  
he made us, when he said, *he shall be*

in you, John 14. 17. He did not come into the World, to visit the Apostles only, and abandon their Posterity. Our Saviour did not send him to us, that he might immediately forsake us, but that he might remain with us for ever, to the end of the World: *I will pray my Father, says he, that he may abide with you for ever, John 14. 16.*

*The Spirit of God shall be in us.* This a solemn Promise of our Saviour himself; we cannot doubt of it, although we cannot but admire it with profound astonishment, like that of Solomon, *will God dwell with us on the Earth, 1 Kings 3. 8. 27.* will the Spirit of God not only dwell here with us, but within us? If Heaven, says he, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this House which I have builded! If we find that Solomon was thus transported when he lookt upon his Temple, and compar'd it with the Majesty of God, to whom he built it; may not we admire much more the living temple of the Holy Ghost? If the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain the Spirit of God, how much less this little house of clay? Can we imagine that this little heart of ours is more capacious than Heaven?

Or can our heart contain our God, if Heaven cannot? Oh no, our God is infinite; he cannot be contain'd in either, and yet he dwells in both. Hear the Psalmist; *To thee I lift up my eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens, Psal. 122. 1.* Hear St. Paul; *You are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you, 1 Cor. 3. 16.* Compare both Testaments, the Old and New; and if you seriously believe them both, conclude we have the same assurance that God dwells in Virtuous Souls, as ~~in~~ he dwells in Heaven.

*The Kingdom of God is within you, Luke 17. 21.* Wheresoever Majesty resides, the Court is there; and wheresoever the King governs, there his Kingdom is. If the Almighty govern all the Passions, Motions and Affections of our Souls; if once he be the Sovereign Monarch of our hearts, if the Love of God give Law to all our Inclinations, the Holy Ghost is then as truly in us, as the King is in his Kingdom, and he is no otherwise in Heaven. This is that Heaven upon Earth which none can understand, but those devout and pious Souls, who by experience *Tast and See, Psal. 33. 9.* how  
sweet



sweet God's Kingdom is, where Christ governs by *Faith*, and the Holy Ghost by *Charity*; or (as St. Austin says) *whose King is truth, whose Law is love.*

A Spirit, having no proportion with Place (if we believe Philosophers) is neither here, nor there, nor any where, of it self; but only by its Operation in a Body, which is in some Place. When Angels formerly appear'd with airy bodies, they were truly and substantially present in those human Forms, which they inhabited, by operating there. Wherever the Airy Body serv'd to do, the Angel truly did, the Angel mov'd, the Angel walkt, the Angel spokt, discours't, convers't with Men. The holy Ghost is likewise truly and substantially present in the Soul of a devout and pious Christian. He dwells in his heart by operating there; his heart becomes a Paradise on Earth: The Love of God, now planted in the middle of it, is the Tree of Life: Gen. 2. 9. The holy Ghost himself becomes the Angel Guardian of the Place, and like the Cherubin defends it with a Flaming Sword, Gen. 3. 24. He gives him Life, *we live by the Spirit*; Gal. 5. 25. He gives him motion, *we walk by the Spirit*; He gives him Speech,

Speech, 'Tis not you that speak, says our Saviour to his Apostles, but the Spirit of God that speaks in you, *Matth. 10. 20.*

So far you see the Parallel betwixt the presence of an Angel dwelling in an airy Body, and the Presence of the holy Ghost inhabiting in us. Only this difference there is. Philosophers are puzzled to explain the *Virtue* and the *Operation* by which an Angel moves the Body it assumes; But Christians, by the light of Faith, have this advantage over them: They plainly read and understand in Scripture, that the *Virtue* of the holy Ghost, by which he moves and governs us, is *Charity*; and that the *Operation*, which *with us* he produces in us, is the *Love of God* above all things. God the holy Ghost is *Charity*; *1 Joh. 4. 8.* He is the *Consubstantial Love* of God the Father, and the Son. If *Charity* inspire us; if the *Love of God* direct us, govern us, and influence the principal Designs and Actions of our Life, we then may reasonably hope, we have not receiv'd the Spirit of this World, but the Spirit which is of God; *1 Cor. 2. 12.*

That

That Inclination which is predominant, and governs all the rest, is usually call'd the Spirit of a Man. If this be Love of Honours, Riches, Pleasures of this World, 'tis an Ambitious, a Covetous, a Carnal, or (to speak them all at once) a Worldly Spirit. But if it be the Love of God above all things, without any competition of Creatures, 'tis a Virtuous, a Divine, a Holy Spirit: Then it is that the Love of God is diffus'd in our hearts, by the holy Ghost, the holy Spirit which is given to us, Rom. 5. 5.

Sr. Paul, when he came to Ephesus, and found certain Disciples, demanded of them; have ye receiv'd the holy Ghost, since ye believed? Acts 19. 1, 2. And I am apt to think it would not be amiss to put the Question to the Christians of our Age. You in whose Minds Christ dwells by Faith, does the holy Ghost dwell in your Hearts by Charity? Is your Love suitable to your Creed? Do you Love God, as you believe he deserves? Do you love him above all things? Your greatest Care, is it to please your God? Your greatest Grief, is it to have displeas'd him? In all things, which deserve Deliberation, do you first consult

consult his Law, and make it the Rule of all your Measures? Examine well the whole Course of your Life; your Actions, Humours, and Designs. What is it that employs your Mind the most? What thoughts are those which close your Eyes at Night, and open them next Morning? Are they fixt upon the *Only Necessary*? Do they tend to Heaven? All things else, what are they? Are they *Nothing* in comparison of *That*? If so, you have receiv'd the holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, *whom the World cannot receive, Joh. 14. 17.* But, if the Sovereign inclination of your hearts be Love of Honours, Riches, Pleasures; if your greatest grief and trouble be your disappointment of Success in these; if upon all occasions you consult your Inclinations, and the Maximes of the World: You then may answer, as the *Ephesians* did; Alas we are but little acquainted with this Holy Spirit; we have scarce heard of him, we know not what he is: A Worldly Spirit we have more acquaintance with; But, as for the Spirit of God, he is a Stranger to us. We say our Prayers, we frequent the Sacraments, we are in the common road of customary Duties: But our Ambitious

Ambitious Spirit, our impatient Love of Honour is such, that we are more concern'd for an Affront, than for a Mortal Sin: our Avaritious Spirit, our insatiable Love of Riches is so violent, that we had rather hazard the loss of all the Heaven we pretend to, than expose the Treasure we possess: our Carnal Spirit, our incontinent Love of Pleasure is so passionate, that we had rather quit our Right to all the Eternal Joys above, than any way deny our selves the rotten satisfaction we seek for here below: In short, we love this World so much, that if we might but always have it at Command; 'Tis All we ask; We wish no more; *We have receiv'd the Spirit of this World.* 1 Cor. 2. 12.

I hope I may be pardon'd if I am a little importune in pressing home this Question; *Have you receiv'd the Holy Ghost?* Acts 19. 2. Eternity depends upon't: Your Choice of Heaven, or Hell; Your being Children of God, or of the Devil; your being Sav'd, or Damn'd for ever: All This, (and what is *All* if *This* be not?) All this depends upon the Answer to this necessary Question. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God,* says St. Paul, *they are the Children*

children of God, Rom. 8. 16. Compute your Actions, Words and Thoughts, from Morning to Night, from Day to Day: Does the Spirit of God direct and lead you? Or the Spirit of this World? If the Spirit of God, you are the Children of God: If not, hear what the Apostle says, *if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. 8. 9.* He is not a Brother of Christ, he is not an Adoptive Son of his Eternal Father; he has a Father in Hell, but none in Heaven. Our Saviour plainly says, *If God were your Father, you would love me above all things, Joh. 8. 34.* but because you do not, you are of your Father the Devil, ver. 44.

Let those who above all things Love the World, Consider this, and Tremble. Let them not gaze in vain upon our Saviour ascending to his Father: Let them be assur'd his Father is not theirs; and that as certainly as he ascended to his Father in Heaven, they shall in time (unless they seriously repent) descend to theirs in Hell.

This was the Reason why our Saviour told the Jews, *whither I go, you cannot come, Joh. 8. 21.* As if he should say, *I go to my Father; If he were your*

your Father also, then you might bear me Company; But, since you have receiv'd the Spirit of this World, 1 Cor. 2. 12. as long as you are govern'd by the Spirit of another Father; You may in due time follow him to Hell, but 'tis impossible (without sincere Repentance) you should ever follow me to Heaven: *Whither I go, you cannot come.* The Jews amaz'd to hear it, knew not what he meant. He told them the Reason: *I am from above, says he, I am not of this world, Job. 8. 23.* The Spirit which governs all my Actions is from above; 'tis not the Spirit of this World; 'tis the Spirit of my Father; therefore I go to him. But on the other side, *you are of this world, Ibid.* You are led by the Spirit of this World; and therefore *whither I go, you cannot come.*

Let us not flatter and deceive ourselves with vain appearances of superficial Piety which flore upon the surface of our Souls; but sound the very bottom of our hearts, and be assur'd that if we find them chiefly fixt upon this World, or any Creature in it; We may stand gazing with the Men of Galilee, we may contemplate and admire the Ascension of our Saviour, but all in vain; all this will

will be no Comfort to us; Whither he goes, we cannot follow him. We cannot Ascend, unless we first receive the holy Ghost; nor can we receive him, unless we first prepare for his reception.

## S E C T. V.

*That we ought to prepare our Heart for  
this great Grace.*

**W**Hen our Saviour was upon the point of leaving his Apostles, after he had been forty days discoursing with them concerning the Kingdom of God; The last and most important thing he recommended to their Care, was that they should prepare themselves for the receiving of the holy Ghost: He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of the Father, Acts 1. 4.

Prepare your Hearts, says the Prophet; Prepare your Hearts to God, and serve Him only, and He will deliver you, 1 Sam. 7. 3. Prepare your hearts to entertain the holy Ghost, or else you never will receive him. Prepare Materials for the Temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6. 19. His Temple is not to be built and finished in a day: We must have time to carry



on the Work, and more than ordinary Preparations must be made: *With all my Might*, says the Royal Prophet, *I have prepar'd for the House of my God*; because, says he, *the Work is great; and the Palace is not for Man, but God*, 1 Chron. 29. 1, 2.

Our heart has been profan'd with Idols: Our Ambition, Avarice, and Lust have had their several *Altars* in it; and from time to time, according as occasion serv'd, have offer'd *Sacrifice* to Honours, Riches, Pleasures. Such a *Temple* so Profan'd, must be demolish'd; and a New one built upon the Ruines of it. *Make your selves a new Heart, and a new Spirit*; says the Prophet, *Ezekiel* 18. 31. Although it be God's work, it is not only *His*, but also *Ours*. As much as lies in us, we must co-operate and labour with him: And the more difficult it is, the more industriously we must endeavour to effect it. *With all our Might*, 1 Chron. 29. 2. with all our industry and diligence, we must prepare our heart, that it may be a *Temple* of the holy Ghost.

O that we had but wings like a Dove, (the wings of that Dove which once descended visibly upon our Saviour) then  
would

would we fly away, and be at rest, *Psalm* 55. 6. Our hearts would fly away from all things in this World, and be at rest in Heaven. If once the Love of God enflame our hearts, with ardent and continual desires of being happy with him, We shall find that these Desires are Wings by which our hearts aspire and mount to Heaven. But if the Love of any thing in this World bind us to the Earth, we then shall find that our Celestial Desires are clogg'd with Earthly Passions; and although we now and then, with a faint sigh, look up to Heaven, yet our stronger Inclinations will always bear us down. He who is wholly disengag'd from all the Charms of a deluding World, he only is at liberty; *St. Austin* says, *The wings of his Soul are Free*; but if his heart be any way ensnar'd with any other Love, He then has Bindings in his wings; he cannot fly away, and be at Rest.

The Apostles themselves were not prepar'd for the receiving of the Holy Ghost, as long as they were satisfied with being Happy in our Saviour's Company on Earth. If any satisfaction here below could innocently challenge so much place in their Affections, surely

Innocence

Innocence it self descending down from Heaven, had the best and clearest Title to their Love. And yet as long as they were of St. Peter's Mind, and thought with themselves, 'Tis good for us to be here; Matth. 17. 4. 'tis good to make our Tabernacles here; so long we find they were not fit for the Reception of the Holy Ghost. I tell you the truth, says our Saviour; 'Tis expedient for you that I go away, Job. 16. 7. because you Love me with so little resignation, and are so unwilling that I leave you; therefore 'tis expedient for you that I now ascend to raise your hearts above the World, and carry them to Heaven with me. If I go not away, your Love will creep upon the Earth, the Spirit of the World will still possess your hearts, the Spirit of God will find no habitation there, v. 7, the Comforter will not come: But if I depart, if I (whom you so dearly love) ascend, your Minds and hearts will follow me to Heaven, they will be rais'd above the reach of all things in this World, the Spirit of the World will have no dwelling there, you then will be prepar'd for the receiving of the Holy Ghost, and when you are so, I will send Him to you, ver. 7.

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When

When the Holy Ghost came, he fill'd all the house where they were sitting, Acts 2. 2. Wherever he comes he fills the house, he takes it all to himself; And 'tis no wonder, being Infinite, he takes up so much room. As God would cease to be immense, if there were any corner of the World in which he is not present, so the Holy Ghost would cease to be our Infinite and Sovereign Good, if any corner of our heart have any thing lodg'd in it, that excludes him. When once we have receiv'd the holy Ghost, our heart is the Kingdom of God. He is the Absolute and Only Monarch that commands it; he cannot alienate the least part of his Title to the Government; he cannot any way admit of a Companion in his Throne. Our heart is the Throne of the Most High: And, if we remember what became of Lucifer, I hope it will suffice to make us sensible, how dangerous a thing it is, to place a Creature in the Throne of God, and make it like the Highest, Isa. 14. 14.

St. *Austin* wondering at the overflowing measure of God's Holy Spirit in the Apostles hearts, observes, that the reason why they were so full of God, was because

cause they were so empty of his Creatures: They were very full, says he, because they were very empty; because they were so empty of the Spirit of this World, therefore they were so full of the Spirit of God.

O that our hearts were empty; O that they were purg'd and cleans'd like theirs from all inordinate affection to this World; We then should be prepar'd like them, and ready to receive the fulness of the Holy Ghost. 'Tis a great Work, and will require some time. Why are we then so slow in undertaking it? *Why do we stand gazing?* Acts 1. 11. we gaze, we lift our eyes to Heaven, but yet we stand; our feet are fixt upon the Earth. We prefer *Heaven* before *Hell*, of the two we had rather be there; but of the three, (if it were possible) we had rather be always here.

*How long will you love Vanity?* says the Psalmist, Psal. 4. 2. This World is nothing else but *Vanity*. *How long will you love it?* 'Tis *Vanity*, and *vanitation of Spirit*, Eccles. 4. 16. *How long will you delight in it?* It flies before you like a *Shadow*, Job. 6. 12. *how long will you run after it?* Alas! 'tis but a *Shadow* if you overtake it. *The World passes*

*See away,* 1 *Joh.* 4. 17. 'Tis an unkind ill-natur'd World which passes by us with a flattering smile, and will not stay a moment with us. If it had ever been a true and faithful Friend to any Man, we should have some pretence to justify our expectation of its being kind: But, since we know it never was so to its greatest Favourites, we may be sure it never will be so to us. The time will come, when we shall plainly see (although perhaps too late) that *All is Vanity*; and we shall love no more what we are now so fond of. The Love of all those Trifles, which our Infancy was once much pleas'd withal, is now forgot; and we so much condemn those Childish entertainments, that unless we saw the same in other Children, we should scarce believe we ever lov'd them. As when we advance in years, we see the folly of our Childhood; so upon our Death-bed we as plainly see the folly of our Life: We then discover that the Honours, Riches, Pleasures of this World, are only so many serious Trifles, which are therefore more ridiculous, because more serious. When once the Period of our time approaches: When we are upon the Borders of Eternity:



nity: When we are, as it were, between two Worlds, the End of this, and the Beginning of the next which never will have end: Then it is that all our Joys begin to vanish out of sight; they are the same to us as if they never had been present: Then, it is that all our Miseries are every one in view, such Miseries as never can be past, but will for ever be always present: When once that hour comes, we shall be wise enough to undervalue and condemn what we so dearly love: But then, I fear, we shall be Wise too late: Our useless Wisdom will not rise in Judgment for us, but against us. O let us now endeavour to be Wise, and disengage our hearts from all inordinate affection to this World; that we may be prepar'd for the receiving of this Grace, which is the best and surest Pledge of the Eternal Glory, which we hope for in the World to come.

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## MOTIVES

OF

## FEAR

## SECT. I.

*How much it imports us to remember the  
Day of Judgment.*

**W**HEN the Disciples ask  
our Saviour what would  
be the Sign of his coming,  
and of the End of the  
World, *Matth. 24. 3.* Our Saviour an-  
swer'd, that the Day and Hour, *ver. 36.*  
were not to be known before hand;  
that his Coming, *v. 27.* would be like a  
flash of Lightning, when they least ex-  
pected him: Therefore, says he, *v. 44.*  
be ready for in such an Hour as you  
think not, the Son of Man will come.  
Heaven

Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away, v. 35. The World shall have an End. The Son of Man shall Come to Judge the World. The hour of his Coming shall surprize us, when we think not of it. If we knew before-hand, we should certainly prepare: And we have much more reason, since we do not know it.

But, alas! our Saviour Jesus Christ himself has prophesied, v. 38. that As in the days that were before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, till the Day that Noe enter'd the Ark, ver. 39. and knew not, till the Flood came, and took them all away: So also shall be the coming of the Son of man. He told us how it would be, and every day we see how true it is. We mind nothing, but eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; We seek for nothing but Diversion, Sport, and Pastime; We now Rejoyce; But then, when the World ends, our Joys will end with it; Then we shall grieve; and not only then, but for ever. Then all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn, Matth. 24. 30. They shall all mourn. Not All the Just; Not All God's Friends, nor all  
C 2                      devout

devout and pious Christians; who not only in their Baptism, but also during Life, renounc'd the Vanities and Pleasures of this World: *All* these will have just reason to abound with Joy, at the approach of their so long desir'd, and everlasting Happiness: *They sow'd with Tears, but now shall reap with Joy*, Psal. 126. 5.

*All the Tribes of the Earth;* All those whose Hearts were always fixt upon the *Earth*; upon the Honours, Riches, Pleasures of the *Earth*; *They shall all mourn.* And not without sufficient Reason. For, 1. They shall see the fatal *End* of all their transitory Happiness. 2. They shall see the sad *Beginning* of their everlasting Misery.

## S E C T. II.

*That our Last Day is the fatal End of all our transitory Happiness.*

**A**S, on the one side, Nothing can be truly *Little*, which is Infinite; So on the other, Nothing can be truly *Great*, which has an End. Our God is *Great*, says the Prophet, Baruch 3. 23. *and has no End.* As if he had a mind to let us understand, that God himself, with

with all his other Attributes, would be but *little*, if He had *one*: that All this World is *therefore* inconsiderable: and that the Next is *therefore* to be valued above all things, because it is a World *without end*. This is the common Misery, attending all our Happiness. All that is *past*, is Nothing: All that we enjoy at *present*, is but one poor moment: All that is *to come*, is every moment less and less, approaching nigher to the final period of its future Being, which is *Nothing*.

The very Thought of this is so afflicting, that it puts a stop to all our joys, and makes us miserable in the full Career of our Felicity: We need no more, to damp our Spirits in the midst of our enjoyments, than the importunity of this unwelcome Thought; *All this will shortly have an End*. The Paradise of our first Parents would have been to them no Paradise at all, had they foreseen the *End* of it. And when God pleas'd to interdict the eating of the fatal fruit, He seem'd to judge that nothing could be more effectual to contain them in their Dury, than to let them know, that *Death* should put an *End* to *All*, if ever they presum'd to eat

of it. As it was then their chief and only comfort, to survey the vast extent and great variety of their Delights, and at the same time confidently say, *all this is ours for ever*, if we please: So it had been impossible for any artifice of the malicious Serpent to surprize them, or prevail upon them, if He had not flatter'd them with some assurance that they should not *Die*; but still be *truly Happy*, that is, happy *without End*.

The Devil does not now pretend to face us down, *We shall not Die*: He knows that so notorious a Cheat would never pass upon us. But yet, for fear least we should undervalue all the vain allurements of a miserable World, he whispers in our ear, *we shall not Die so soon*: he has not the impudence to tell us that the World will *never end*, but that it will not end *so soon* as we imagine: *Thou hast many goods*, says the Rich Man in the Gospel, *laid up for many years*, Luke 12. 19.

This is in short, the Sum of our Felicity on Earth. The Happiest Man that ever liv'd, could say no more than this. He could not say, that he had *All* which he desir'd: he could not but observe, by sad experience, that he was  
still

still unsatisfied, and that his small Possessions were nothing to his great Desires. Nor could he say that what he had would *always* be his own: He could not but be well acquainted with the truth of what *Man* is; he daily *Dies*; he every moment is upon his journey to the Grave; *He wastes away, gives up the Ghost, and where is he?* Job 14. 10. However, he might say, to comfort his insatiable Soul; Although thou hast not *All* that thou canst wish for, *Thou hast many Goods*; and, though thou canst not possibly enjoy them *always*, yet they are *laid up for many years*; thy Palace is magnificent, thy Entertainment splendid, thy Attendance numerous, thy Gardens are a Paradise of pleasure and delight, thy Honour equal to thy Fortune, and thy Power equal to both; the World admires thee, courts thee, and almost adores thee; is not this enough? *Thou hast many goods.* And why should any melancholy apprehensions seize thy Spirits, and disturb thy Mind with fearful thoughts of losing what thou hast? there is no danger, whilst thou liv'st, and thou art in the flower of thy age, just ripe for pleasure, healthy, vigorous, and like to live

live these many years. And what hast thou to do, but take thy Ease, Eat, Drink, and be as Merry, Luke 12. 19. as if thou wert to live for ever.

Behold the best that we can make of the most happy State we hope for here. We dare not look before us; lest we see the end of all our joys. We blindly dote upon these Darlings of our Passion, and endeavour to forget the misery of their Mortality, and ours. We are not able to support a serious thought of our perpetual decay; and though we love our selves above all things, yet we hate the very sight of our condition; we cannot endure to look into our selves; and as an idle Solitude is ever troublesome, because we love no Company so little as our own; so this great reason, why the Company of any other person is so pleasing, is because it binds us from thinking of our selves.

The Greatest and most Happy Man, whose Heart is fixt upon this World, would soon be Melancholy if he had but leisure to reflect, that every Moment leads him to the period of his Happiness. The doleful Prospect of a future separation is so terrible, that he endeavours all he can to think of nothing farther



farther than the present. All the busie Agitation of his Mind, the Exercises of his Body, and the Pastimes of his Conversation, are delightful to him chiefly upon this account; because they are *Diversions*; that is, because they fix his mind upon the present moment, and divert him from the melancholy thought, that *all his happiness must have an end.*

If the bare thought of our approaching Period be so doleful, even at a distance, where uncertainty gives room to make the most we can of our Felicity; if, I say, the very thought of it be so afflicting, what will the presence of it be, when with our own eyes we shall see that fatal End which now we are so much afraid to think of? We now are merry and rejoyce, because we banish from us the uneasy Apprehension: But then all those who will be sad Spectators of this doleful Scene, will be no longer able to divert themselves from thinking of the Misery they see before them. *Then all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn,* Matth. 24. 30.

To close the Eyes of any dy'ng Friend we dearly love, is apt to move our tears; although our other Friends, who yet survive, are still a comfort to us.

But when their Dearest Friend, the World it self, begins to die; When all their Comfort, all at once forsakes them; when the Sun and Moon grow dark, and the expiring World begins to close its Eyes: *Then they shall all mourn.*

When once that dismal Day is come, which the Prophet *Zephaniah* calls the *Great Day of the Lord, a Day of Calamity and Misery, a Day of Darkness, a Day of Tribulation and Distress, Ch. 1. 13.* When Cataracts of Fire shall shower down upon their heads, as if the Stars themselves fell from the Firmament: When in the last Convulsions of its mortal Agony, the Earth trembles, and Hell it self lies gaping under their feet: Then they shall plainly see the meaning of that Vision in the *Revelations, Ch. 10. 5, 6.* which represents an Angel standing with one foot upon the raging Sea, another on the trembling Land, *lifting his hand to Heaven, and swearing by him that lives for ever; Time shall be no more.*

Poor miserable Wretches! There was once a Time, when Honours, Dignities and Titles recommended them to the admiring World, whose eyes were dazled

dazled with the glory of their Greatness: They were follow'd, waited on, and Celebrated in their Generation: But, now, alas! They shall be so *No more*. There was a *Time*, when they abounded in the over-flowing measure of their Wealth; their Palaces were sumptuous; and all things suitable to the aspiring Height of their Ambition: But now, *No more*: Their great Magnificence is buried in the ruins of the World; their Gold and Silver melted down into the Earth, from whence it came; and all their Pride lies levell'd with the common dust, to which all Things return. There was a *Time*, when all the sinful *Pleasures* of the World attended them; when they deny'd their Passions nothing that they ask'd; when they had full Command of All that they desir'd, and rather cloy'd than satisfy'd their brutal appetites: But now, *No more*. Their Honour, Riches, Pleasures, All are at an End: Their *Time* is at an End: Their *Time shall be no more*.

When, as it happens frequently amongst the various accidents of Human Life, We are depriv'd of some particular Enjoyment which we passionately love;

love; though we lament and grieve, yet we have still some Comfort left: 'Tis not a total deprivation of *All* that we enjoy. The Damage is supported by some other Pleasures, and Conveniences. If one Friend die, our other Friends survive. If one forsake us, we may find another faithful to us. Or, if they all abandon us, yet our misfortune is not universal; We have always something left, which we can think upon without affliction, and repose our wearied Thoughts. He that is dangerously Sick of one or two Diseases, is not at the same time sick of all the rest. Whatever his Condition is, he always has some hopes of being better: And although these hopes are very little, they are still some little Comfort to a Man in Misery. But when this Dreadful Day is come, which puts an end to Time, it puts an end to *All* their Hopes; *All* that they ever lov'd, or now desire, abandons them; their Inclinations are more lively than they ever were, and all are disappointed. *Then All the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn;* to see the fatal End of *All* their transitory Happiness. But, alas! this is not *All*: They shall have much more

more reason to lament and grieve, when at the same time they behold the sad beginning of their Everlasting Misery.

### SECTION III.

*That our Last Day is the sad Beginning of our Everlasting Misery.*

**W**E have seen the dreadful symptoms of an agonizing World; the terrible Convulsions of expiring Nature, and the final End of *All* that Sinners love with so much Passion: an End of all Ambition, Avarice, and Pleasure; an End of all their Honours, Riches, and Amours; an End of politick Designs, of ancient Families, of nuptial Joys; an End of idle Conversations, Balls, and Plays; an End of Beauty, Wit, and Courage; an End of all their Feasting, Drinking, and Diverting; an End of all their Mirth, Delight, and Pastime; And, which of all things is most terrible to a despairing Soul, an End of Sin, but not an End of the Sinner; an End of Pleasure, but not an End of Pain; an End of Time, but not an End of their Eternity, which *Everlastingly* Begin, and never have an End. After Hundreds, Thousands, Millions,

Millions, not of Years but Ages; if we may suppose that Heaven and Earth, with all that they contain, were chang'd into numeral figures; at the foot of the Account, wharever it amount to, you may find it written, *Here Eternity begins.* Moreover, if you multiply this number by it self, and by the same Rule multiply the Product of it, All is Nothing to Eternity; Wherever this innumerable number Ends, *Eternity Begins.*

If *All* be Nothing to Eternity, What will the inconsiderable number of those years which Sinners prodigally spend in Sin, What will it then appear to be? Will it not seem incomparably less than Nothing? And will not Sinners then have too much reason to lament, that for so short a Moment, so much less than Nothing, they have forfeited the Eternal Joys of Heaven, and incurr'd the everlasting pains of Hell? *What is a Man advantag'd,* says our Saviour, *Luke 9. 25. if he gain the whole World, and lose himself?* Alas! poor Souls, what Comfort is it to have gain'd the World, and lost your selves? to have lost all Happiness, and gain'd (if I may call

(call it Gain) all Misery, and *All* for *Nothing*.

What Pains, and by what Means they are to suffer, is a Question fitter for our Curiosity than our Edification. 'Tis enough, to know as much of Hell, as the Apostle tells us of Heaven, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *Neither the Eye has seen, nor the Ear heard, nor has it entred into the Heart of any Man,* what unspeakable Pains and Torments the Almighty has prepar'd in the *next* Life, for those who have in *this* offended Him. 'Tis

enough that God is certainly as *Just* as He is *God*, and therefore infinitely Just.

'Tis enough that the *Enormity* of Sin, which he so patiently endures, is aggravated by the Greatness of his Majesty, and therefore infinitely *Infinite*.

It follows evidently hence,

that All (a) which God's great Wisdom can invent,

All that his Justice (b) can exact, and All that his

Omnipotence (c) can put in execution will be All

employ'd to punish those who have offended him.

It follows also that it is as much impossible for any

(a) *All the most effectual and most proper Means.*

(b) *By the Eternal Rule of his Decree.*

(c) *According to the Sentence.*

Man

Man to comprehend the great excess of those Eternal Pains, as tis to understand God's Wisdom, Justice, and Omnipotence, All which are infinitely rais'd above the reach of human Reason. However we may easily conjecture something, by considering God's Justice in this World, and judging thence, what it may be hereafter.

If the Just themselves are so severely punisht in this World, if it be true, as the Psalmist says, *Psal. 34. 19. Many are the Afflictions of the Righteous*; if even God's Friends, who are so faithful to him, undergo such punishments for little failings in their Duty; what will become of his Enemies, who forfeit all their Title to his Friendship, by their grievous Sins?

If in the days of overflowing Mercy, which appear'd so eminently above all his Works, he gave such signal instances of his avenging Anger; if even when his Pity (in a manner) held his hands, the fury of his Wrath broke loose, and with an universal Deluge laid the world so deep in water, that amongst so many millions, not a single Sinner could escape: What will become of miserable Sinners at the Day of Judgment, when the



the End of Time shall put an end to all his Goodness, all his Kindness, all his Mercy, and begin the Triumph of Eternal Justice? When our God will be to us no longer Good, no longer Kind, no longer Merciful, but only Just: Eternally and Infinitely Just.

Our Saviour Jesus will not then appear as the Physician, (a) and Redeemer of our Souls, but only as the Judge of all our Actions: And even to his Friends (b) at his Right Hand. He will not shew himself in any other Quality: The very Sentence of their Happiness will be an Act of Justice only (c) not of Mercy: Our Lord, says the Apostle, at that Day will be a Righteous Judge. 'Tis true, 'twas nothing but the merciful Assistance of his Grace which heretofore enabled them to fight, and finish well their Course; but now, in the Rewarding of his Friends according to his Promise (d) He's no longer Merciful, if we believe St. Paul, but only Righteous and Just.

(a) 'Tis too late to be

Cured, or

Redeem'd

(b) As

Judge be

appoints

them that

place.

(c) No

an Act of

Pardon.

(d) No longer

inclined to

Pardon.

- If

If at that Day He would be Merciful to any, He would surely be so to his Friends: And since the Best and

Faithfullest of all his Servants find no Mercy (a) at their Tryal, Can his Enemies expect it? 'Tis call'd the Day of Judgment, to

distinguish it from all these other Days of Mercy: And if in these He shower'd down Fire from Heaven, 'tis no wonder if in these the Stars themselves will seem to fall: If Sodom and Gomorrah were consum'd, 'tis easie to believe that then the Earth will All of it be laid in Ashes. But, alas! this Universal Deluge of devouring Fire, together with the Darkness of the Sun and Moon, the roarings of the Sea, and howlings of the Wind and Air; All this is but a Prelude to the Misery of Sinners; This is only the Beginning of their sorrows, Matth. 24. 8. This is nothing but their Summons to appear before the Bar; And 'tis the dreadful Apprehension of their Judgment and Damnation which torments them with an agonizing Fear.

There was a Time when Life was sweet; but now they hate it. There was

was once a Time, when the despair of Living was their greatest pain; but now, the Scene is chang'd, and the despair of Dying is incomparably more tormenting. *In those days*, says the beloved Disciple, *Revel. 9. 6. Men shall seek Death, and shall not find it; They shall desire to Die, and Death shall fly from them.* There was a Time, when Sinners laugh'd at all the Fears and Apprehensions of this Day; but now the *Time of laughing*, *Eccles. 3. 4.* will be past; nor will it be, as *Solomon* calls it, *a Time to mourn*: it will not be a Time, but an *Eternity* to mourn.

*Then all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn.* Not only those who whilst they liv'd were thought to carry visibly the mark of Reprobation in their foreheads; but also such as liv'd great Saints in the esteem of Men, and died great Sinners in the sight of God; shall then desire to die again, and seek for an *Eternal Death*, and shall not find it. Then shall their conceal'd Abominations, all their shameful Actions, all their secret Works of Darkneſs, come to light. Then nothing shall be covered, nothing so industriously hid, but what shall

*shall be reveal'd Matth. 10. 26. to all the World. Nor only those who took such care to hide their Sins from others, but even those who formerly were us'd to hide them from themselves, shall clearly see the Malice of their palliated Crimes: Then they shall see, and then they shall mourn, Matth. 24. 30.*

We now are willing to live peaceably and quietly within our selves; we do not much delight in the remorse of a guilty Mind; and therefore we contrive some kind of Conscience for every thing we do. We are uneasy at the thought of everlasting pains; and therefore, if we ever take our selves to task, we rake together all we can to make a favourable judgment of our state. As the Examen rather is design'd to please our selves, than God, 'tis generally very superficial. We look upon our Actions all in gross, without enquiring much into the drift and chief design of them. We look upon the outward shew; the approbation and esteem of Men; The example of some, who pass for good and virtuous, and yet have often done the same as we do; Our being free (as we suppose) from many faults which we observe not in  
first our

our selves; our great abhorrence of some certain Sins, which we observe in others; Our being punctually and religiously precise in some small matters, some exterior mortifications, some particular Devotions which we take a fancy to: And thus we frame a false Idea of the miserable State we shall be found in, when we come before the Bar. We *now* are proud, and willing to excuse our selves: but *then* the Testimony of our clearer sighted Conscience will confound and humble us. Our Passions blind us *now*; we see not what we truly are: But *then* the Sun of Justice will arise, and scatter all the darkness which conceals us from our selves. The piercing rays, the All-discovering beams of Truth will break like Lightning through the Clouds of our affected ignorance, when once the Son of Man appears to judge the World.

If there were any possibility of cheating his All-seeing Wisdom; of calling back the time of his indulgent Mercy; or escaping from the hands of his Almighty Power: Were there any possibility of this, or were there any Friend from whom the guilty might expect the least

least assistance; it would be some little Comfort.

They had *once* a true and faithful Friend, who dearly lov'd them; came from Heaven to instruct them, and conduct them thither; liv'd a painful and laborious Life amongst them; and although neglected, scorn'd, and persecuted by them, yet continued constant in his Love, and to redeem them, paid their Ransom with the price of his own Blood. But *now* their best and only Friend becomes their greatest Enemy. He lov'd them *once*: But Love so long neglected, and so much abus'd, is now quite chang'd into a mortal and eternal Hatred. He invit'd all of them to come to Him whenever they had need of his Assistance, *Matth. 11. 28. Come to me All you that labour*: But *now* alas! it is too late to come: His Patience now is spent; and in the Fury of his everlasting indignation He for ever banishes them from him, *Matth. 25. 41. Go from me ye accursed*. Go Ambitious Souls, and leave your honourable Titles all behind you; go and seek the best preferment you can find amongst the Devil and his Angels; *Ibid. ver. 41. Go*

Go *Insatiable* Misers; go, and take possession of that Misery which you have purchas'd with the loss of your beloved Treasure: Go *Voluptuous* Wretches; you who formerly have wisht your Flames might ever burn; Go *now*, and burn for ever, in the everlasting Flames of Hell.

Behold, the dreadful Sentence we must All expect, unless we follow his Advice, who *then* will be our Judge, Luke 21. 36. *Watch therefore, says He, and Pray always; that you may then be accounted worthy to escape, and stand before the Son of Man.* Alas! Our dear Redeemer takes no pleasure in Condemning us. No Man, says St. Austin, who designs to strike us, bids us have a Care. Our Saviour often warns us, often calls upon us, often bids us have a care. St. Paul exhorts us in his Name, Rom. 13. 11. *'Tis now the hour for us to rise from sleep: 'Tis now the hour to go with tears of true Repentance to the Throne of Grace; that then we may appear with Confidence and Joy before the great Tribunal of his Justice: 'Tis now the Hour to hearken to Him, Mat. 11. 28. Come to me all you that labour; that*

that then we may be sure to hear him  
call us to him, *Matth. 25. 34. Come ye  
Blessed; Come and reap the fruit of all  
your labours; Come and take posses-  
sion of those Everlasting Joys, which  
were prepar'd for you, from the Founda-  
tion of the World. Amen.*

Behold, the dreadful Sentence we  
must All expect, unless we follow his  
Advice, which then will be our Judge,  
*Luke 13. Watch therefore, says He,  
and Pray always; that you may stand  
before the Son of Man. Alas! Our dear  
Redeemer takes no pleasure in Con-  
demning us. No Man, says St. Augustin,  
wishes to strike us, bids us have a  
Cane. Our Saviour often warns us,  
and often bids us have a  
Rod. He often warns us in his Sermons,  
and often bids us have a Rod to go  
with tears of true Repentance to the  
Throne of Grace; that when we may  
appear with confidence and joy before  
the great Tribunal of his Justice; that  
we may be able to hear him call us to  
him, and that we may be able to stand  
before the Son of Man.*



# MOTIVES OF HOPE.

## SECT. I.

*How unreasonable a thing it is for any  
Sinner to Despair.*

**T**HE greatest Mystery of Christian Morality consists in the equal ballancing of *Hope* and *Fear*, betwixt God's *Mercy* and his *Justice*; that we may neither be secure in *Sin*, because he is so *Merciful*; nor yet despond, because he is so *Just*. *Presumption* and *Despair* are the two *Rocks* twixt which all *Christians* ought to steer an even course; and so avoid the *One*, as not to dash upon the *Other*. 'Tis perhaps the  
D greatest

greatest Secret of the Devil's Art. He first inclines us to *Presume*; And we no sooner see the danger of it; but he tempts us to *Despair*. Thus he commences, thus he finishes his work.

I must confess the greatest part of Mankind being so insensible, so stupid, so immerst in worldly Cares and Pleasures, is enough to justify the pious zeal of those who frequently proclaim the menaces of an offended Majesty, and with the formidable noise of Hell, Damnation, and everlasting Torments labour to awake and rouse them from the Lethargy of Sin. But, when they are awake, and looking round about them, take a prospect of their miserable State; when every horrid Crime appears in its own dreadful shape; when multitudes of past offences crowd into their Minds; and overwhelm their heavy thoughts with a despairing expectation of no less than everlasting Misery: Alas! poor Souls, it is not now a seasonable time to magnify the Motives of their Fear. If ever Comfort and Encouragement were necessary to allay the pains and anguishes of a despairing Soul; Now is the time. What shall we say? Tell them, they need

need not fear? Oh no: The malice of their grievous sins is infinite; the danger of their lamentable State is greater than they can imagine: Let but their Hope be equal to their Fear, they cannot fear too much. How then shall we encourage their expiring Hope? I'll tell you how.

If God were only *Just*, and were not also *Powerful* and *Merciful*, a Sinner then might lawfully despair: But when God's *Power* and *Mercy* both concur to comfort the desponding Heart of an afflicted Penitent, What can he wish for more? There are but two Conditions requisite to qualifie the Person, upon whose assistance we depend, that we may safely hope, and with a loving confidence assure our selves of his Protection. The first is, that he *can* relieve us, if he will: the second; that he *will* relieve us, if we please. *Will*, without *Power*, signifies but little: *Power*, without *Will*, signifies much less. But when they both meet in the person of a *Friend*, to whom we always have a free access; who certainly *can* help us, if he will; and no less certainly *will* help us, if we please: Then, let our *present* misery be never

so great, let the approaching danger of our *future* ruine every day seem greater, we may with trembling hearts expect the helping Hand which *can* and *will* deliver us; but all our Fear can never exclude our Hope; it cannot rob us of that Comfort, Satisfaction, and Joy, which so much Confidence in such a *Friend* inspires.

If when a Sinner struggles with his Chains; endeavours to break loose; and more he struggles, more he finds himself engag'd; (which the All-seeing Wisdom frequently permits, to humble a proud Soul :) If then these two great Truths were settled in his Mind, to wit, that God can free him, if he *will*, and that He *will* not fail to free him, if he please: O! with what pleasure would he relish the assurance of this loving Confidence! with how much transport of a joyful Mind; would he recite those words of St. Paul, 1 Tim. 1. 12. *I know in whom I have believ'd; I know in whom I put my trust; I know and am persuaded, He is able to deliver me. I am assur'd, He is not only Powerful but Merciful; and therefore I am certain He both can and will assist me.*

## S E C T. II.

*That God can help us if he will.*

**D**ivinity and boundless Power are so much the same, that no Man can deny the one, and own the other. There is no Truth so evident, in which the World so universally agrees, as God's Omnipotence. Every body knows that Nothing is impossible to God. 'Tis one of the first Truths which a Philosopher demonstrates, or a Christian believes. *Almighty* is his Name; the Name we know him by; the Name He answers to, when ever we call upon Him.

What need I then discourse upon a Truth, which every body knows? The Reason is, Because although we know it well enough, We very seldom, hardly ever, think of it.

We all know Nothing is impossible to God: and that the lamentable State of a poor Sinner cannot be so desperate, but that He can retrieve him. And yet how little do we think of this, when we are tempted to despair? Do we not then behave our selves as if we doubted of it? I am afraid that, at the best, we

pray like him, of whom St. Mark makes mention; *Ch. 9.22. Lord, If Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.* I fear we often are incredulous, and have just reason to repeat *with tears* his humble prayer, *ver. 23. Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief.*

If David, that great Saint, *1 Sam. 13. 14.* according to God's heart, who looking back to take a view of all his past iniquities, saw at a distance only some few Sins, which he had long since wash'd away with penitential tears; if He could scarce support the terrour of that melancholy prospect, as he says himself, *Psal. 38. 3, 4, 6, 10.* and *all day long went mourning for his Sins;* if his heart panted, and his strength fail'd him; if he had no rest, because he was over head in his iniquities, which like a heavy burden were too heavy for him; If He, I say, were thus perplex'd with Fear, and almost ready to Despair of his Salvation; Have not I just cause to apprehend much more the Danger of such Doubts in greater Sinners, who are almost surfeited with Sin, before they seriously begin to look behind them, and compute the terrible arrears of all their past Offences?

I must

I must confess, the difficulties which occur in the Conversion of a Sinner, are insuperable, if compar'd to the weak strength of our corrupted Nature; and if the possibility of working our Salvation be consider'd only with regard to human Frailty, there appears no hope of compassing so great a Work. Such is the Ignorance and Blindness of our *Understanding*; Such is the Malice and Perverseness of our *Will*; our *Inclinations* are so prone to liberty; and the Restraint of our unreasonable *Humours* is so sensibly uneasy to us, that a thorough Reformation of our Lives is far above our single strength. Without the Grace of God, we neither have the Wisdom to contrive it, nor the Courage to begin it, nor the Power to perform it.

But yet this darkness of our *Reason*, though we cannot of our selves dispell it, may be dissipated by a lively Faith in Him, who enlightens every Man that comes into the World, John 1. 9. This depravation and Corruption of our *Will*, (although it be to us alone impossible) may by the sweet and forcible impulses of a powerful Grace be chang'd and rectified: This obstinate Rebellion of

our Appetite against the Rule of Reason, and the Precepts of a Christian life, (though we have often found our selves unable to reduce it to the terms of just Obedience) may easily be conquer'd by Omnipotence.

If Sin have so much blinded us, that we can hardly see our danger: If the Noise of Worldly vanities have made us almost deaf to all good counsel: If the Habit of our Sins have lam'd us, so that we can scarcely move a foot towards Heaven: If we are *blind, deaf, lame*, nay even *dead* to God, and all that's good, (no Person can be in a worse condition than this) All this is nothing to the powerful hand of God: Such Miracles as these were his familiar Exercise on Earth. *Matth. 11. 5. The Blind see, the Deaf hear, the Lame walk, the Dead are rais'd to Life.* All this our God can easily perform, in favour of us, whensoever He pleases.

*Lord, if thou wilt,* says the Leprous Man, *thou canst make me clean,* *Matth. 8. 2.* Let the diseases of a sinful Soul be ever so inveterate, so deeply rooted in the heart, He clearly and distinctly comprehends the nature of them all. He knows exactly the proportion and  
virtue



virtue of his Remedies: And all of them obey the word of his Command; Matth. 8. 3. *I will,* says he, *Be thou cleans'd;* (when once God says the word, the work is done) immediately his Leprosie was cleans'd.

*Create in me, O my God, Create in me a clean Heart, Psal. 51.* I ask not any thing but what is easie to Thee. Alas! it is to me impossible: but Thou, my God, canst do it with more ease than I can ask it. Behold my misery with pity and compassion. Behold me indigent and naked, cloath'd with nothing but the horrid scurf of my Uncleaness. Behold me *Blind, Deaf, Lame;* and almost dead with a contagious leprosie of Sin, which covers me from head to foot, and has not left a sound part in me. Conscious of my unworthiness, after so long neglecting my Condition, after so long confiding in my own weak strength, after so long despairing of my health, because I thought I could do any thing, and found I could not Cure my self; Conscious, I say, of my Unworthiness, I scarce pretend to ask for Mercy: I only cast my self upon my knees and face prostrate before thy feet, exposing and laying open all my grie-

vous distempers, which, every one of them (though I am humbly silent) every one speaks loudly my necessities, and begs with all the moving eloquence of Misery thy pity and assistance. I know my Sins provoke thy Justice, whilst my Misery appeals to thy Almighty Power: But thy faithful Servant David tells me, that the *Israelites* provok'd Thee also; and nevertheless, not for their sake, but for thy Name's sake, *Psal.* 106. 8. Thou wast pleas'd to save them; that Thou might'st make thy mighty Power known. This is the first Foundation of my Hope: I know the Credit of thy Power is engag'd in their behalf, who trust entirely in it, firmly expect it, and depend upon it: And therefore, in this posture, I present my self with loving Confidence before thy Feet, resolving there to expect with all Humility and Patience when thou shalt please to cast an eye upon me, and either find the Benefit of being cur'd, or (which appears to me impossible) die in the hands of an Omnipotent Physician. Ah my dear Jesus! This is all that I can do: And even This I cannot do without thy Grace: But, when I have done This,

This, my Comfort is, that Thou canst do the rest: *Lord if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean, Matth. 8. 2.*

Dear Christians, let us pause a while, and with a serious attention behold this Leper at our Saviour's feet: Behold the lively Image of a Sinner, and the perfect Model of a Penitent: Behold both what we are, and what we ought to be: In his Disease, we see our Misery; in his Behaviour, we see our Duty: in his Disease, we see the sad effects of Sin; we see the strong temptations and assaults of a most terrible Despair: In his Behaviour, we see the fruits of true Repentance, we see the victory of a triumphant Hope, and the great comfort which attends a loving Confidence in God's Omnipotence.

O what a Comfort is it to an humble Penitent, to be assured that as God gives him All he has, so He can give him All he wants! If we are almost quite oppress'd with those aridities and desolations of Mind, which none can know but by experience; St. Paul tells us, 2 Cor. 9. 8. *God is able to make all Grace abound in us:* If we labour under the perpetual violence of importune tempta-

temptations; the same *St. Paul* assures us, *Heb. 2. 18.* *God is able to succour those that are tempted:* If our temptations are so strong, and we so negligent, that after some resistance we relapse into our Sins; if we rise again, and yet fall; if we renew our Resolutions, and when we think our selves securest, are surpris'd and fall again; *St. Paul* assures us, *Rom. 14. 4.* *God is able to make us stand:* If having tried all ways we can imagine, we are at a loss, and know not either what to think or what to ask; the same Saint tells us, *Ephes. 3. 20.* *God is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think.*

*Is any thing too hard for God?* *Gen. 18. 14.* Can any thing be hard to him whose Power is infinite, and whose Will is his Power? *1 Sam. 2. 6.* Our Lord kills, and makes alive; brings to the grave, and raises up. His Power accompanies our Souls as far as the gates of Hell in self, and brings them back again. Although your Soul, quite overgrown with sin, may be (perhaps) in the All-seeing Eye of God, a much more horrid object than the foulest Devil in Hell; Nevertheless go confidently with

with the Leper to our Saviour; croud in amongst the multitudes that follow Him; cast your self down upon your knees and face; Say, with a truly contrite, truly humble heart, *Matth. 8. 2. Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*: Then shall you hear him graciously return that comfortable answer; *I will; be thou clean*: Then shall you be transported with excess of joy, to find and feel the truth of what I now advance; to wit, that God not only *can* relieve us if he will, but also *will* relieve us if we please.

### S E C T. III.

*That God will help us if we please.*

**A**Lthough God's Power be the first Foundation of our Hope; his Mercy, always ready to assist us, is the principal, if not the only Motive of it. This was the comfortable Meditation with which the Royal Prophet counterballanc'd all his Fears, *Psal. 26. 3. Thy Mercy, says he, Thy loving Kindness is always before my eyes*. Without this comfort he would never have supported the remorses of his Conscience, *Psal. 50. 4. his Sin was ever before him*: His continual

continual Apprehensions and frightful Thoughts would certainly have driven him into a deep Despair, had not God's Mercy also always been before him, Psal. 26. 3. The very thought of God reviv'd his drooping Spirits: he could not so much as think of Him, without thinking of his Mercy: to be God, and to be Merciful, were to him one and the self same thing, Ps. 59. 17. *my God is my defence,* says he, *and the God of my Mercy.* If he lifted up his eyes to Heaven, with inflam'd desires of being happy there; he ador'd that Mercy which preserv'd the Angels, and rewarded them with Glory; Ps. 36. 5. *Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens.* If he lookt down, and took a prospect of this vale of miseries; he admir'd, to see God's Mercy stoop so low, to see it most appear where there is most occasion for it, to see it superabound where Sin abounds, Ps. 33. 5. *The Earth is full of his Mercy.* If he lookt before him, he beheld God's Mercy starting first, preventing, and fore-running all his good designs and enterprizes, Ps. 59. 10. *His Mercy will prevent me.* If he lookt behind him, he beheld the self same Mercy following him, promoting,

moring, carrying on, and perfecting his good Endeavours, Ps. 23. 6. His Mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life. Which way soever he cast his eye, he saw himself defended and surrounded with God's Mercy, himself the Center, Mercy the Circumference, Ps. 32. 10. Him that trusts in God, Mercy shall compass him about: Thus did this Saint, who once had been a Sinner, Thus did he comfort and encourage his afflicted Soul, when ever the remembrance of his Sins oppress'd his Mind: And thus may we, in imitation of him, Thus may we also answer all the troublesome suggestions of our panick Fears; confronting Sin with Grace, Justice with Mercy, Fear with Hope and loving Confidence in him, whose Mercy still is infinite, and always will be so; Ps. 100. 5. His Mercy is Everlasting.

All this, you'll say, is little comfort to a Sinner, who is day and night obsessed with all the terrifying Spectres of a guilty Conscience. Every body knows that God is infinitely Merciful. But yet the Word of God assures us, and it is a fundamental Truth which

every

every Christian is acquainted with; *Matth. 22. 14.* That few are chosen amongst many which are call'd; that the Gate which leads to Life is strait and narrow, and that there are but few who find it: *Matth. 7. 14.* so that all the splendid Appearance of God's Mercy, when 'tis well examined, seems to vanish out of sight, or shrink into a little compass, if compar'd with the innumerable numbers of those Reprobates. *Rom. 9. 22.* who are prepar'd and fitted for Destruction. Is not this enough to make a Sinner tremble? A sinner who is conscious to himself of being much more guilty in the sight of God, than many millions of those Souls who are already gone before him, and already suffer the eternal flames of Hell?

These Thoughts, I must confess, are Terrible. To him whose eyes are open by God's grace to see the malice of his Sins, and see Death, Judgment, and Damnation attend; Such thoughts as these, to such a man, are terrible beyond expression. But however, if a man be more afraid than hurt, where is the harm of all his Fear? Are we not All oblig'd to humble our proud hearts under the powerful hand of God,  
1 Pet.



1 Pet. 5. 6. and work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling? Pil. 2. 12. Is not our obligation to fear, consistent with our greater motives, greater obligations to hope? 'Tis one of the most dangerous mistakes that we are subject to. We seem to fancy that our Fear destroys our Hope; and that we cannot hope unless we cease to fear. We take these two Affections of the Mind for mortal Enemies, because their humours are so opposite. But, as that Friendship is the greatest, which no difference of Humour can divide: So, if we examine well the matter, we shall find that Fear and Hope are such inseparable Friends, they cannot possibly subsist without each other's company; The Separation of the one, is certainly the Death and Ruine of the Other. Fear without Hope, degenerates into Despair. Hope, without Fear, is now no longer Hope, but dangerous Presumption. If now and then our Minds are troubled and perplexed with Fear; We must not therefore presently conclude, that we have lost our Hope: No, no; We should have lost it, if we did not fear.

If the Consideration of God's Justice make a Sinner tremble; he may  
la w

lawfully desire to be deliver'd from the uneasiness, the pain, and the anxiety, which are the troublesome Companions of his Fear: But as for Fear it self, 'tis an essential Duty of a Christian, which cannot upon any terms admit a Dispensation. If the unsearchable Designs and Secrets of God's Providence are apt to fill our Souls with apprehensions and fears; this only helps us to perform the one half of our Duty, without prejudicing the performance of the other: for the more we fear his Justice, so much more we hasten to the shelter of his Mercy.

This was the only Refuge which the Royal Prophet had recourse to, *Psal. 77. 2. in his days of trouble, when his Soul refused to be Comforted. v. 9. Has God, says he, forgotten to be gracious? Has He shut up, in Anger, all his tender Mercies? v. 8. Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promise fail for evermore? Oh no; His promise cannot fail: He can no more deceive, than be deceiv'd. He has sign'd his promise more than once in Scripture: And with a solemn Oath He has deliver'd it. A Promise and an Oath, which, by Commission*

mission from Himself, his Ministers are order'd to make use of.

When Sinners are dejected with Temptations of Despair : *Ezek. 33. 10.* When their Transgressions and their Sins lie heavy upon them : When they begin to pine away with Fear, and melancholy Thoughts of never being able to recover : What shall we say to comfort them ?

Say to them, says the Prophet : *Ezek. 33. 11. 14.* If the wicked turn from his sin ; if he repent ; if he amend, v. 15. and walk in the Statutes of Life ; He shall surely live (and what can be more sure, since God himself is pleas'd to say it ?) v. 15. He shall surely live ; He shall not die. v. 16. None of the sins he has committed, shall be ever mention'd to him ; he shall hear of them no more ; they shall not rise in judgment against him : God himself has promis'd, v. 16. He shall surely live ; He shall not die.

Say to them again ; and say it boldly, in his Name whose Justice makes them tremble : *Ezek. 33. 11.* As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the Death of the wicked ; but that the Wicked turn from his way, and Live. Return, says He, Return from your evil ways : Why will you die ?

Why

*Why will you Die?* As who should say; you *may* live if you *will*; I always am at hand, prepar'd to help you, if you heartily repent; you know, you may recover, if you have a mind to it; you know, that if you die, it is because you *will*: *As I Live I have no pleasure in your Death*, and therefore I have reason to complain, *Why WILL you Die?*

Dear Christians, What can we wish for more? We know that God can help us *if He will*. Whether He *will* or no, we need no farther proof, than his own Word. We have his Word: We have his Oath: He cannot take his own Great Name in vain; And he has sworn by his own Life, He has no pleasure in our Death; He does not, of himself, desire it; but that

<i>O beatorum</i>	<i>we return and live. O!</i>
<i>rum causa Deus</i>	<i>we are happy; for whose</i>
<i>jurat!</i>	<i>sake God swears! But</i>
<i>O miseros, si nec juran-</i>	<i>O! how miserable are</i>
<i>ti Domino credimus!</i>	<i>we; if, when God him-</i>
	<i>self is pleas'd to swear,</i>
	<i>we can't believe him!</i>

If Deeds are better proof than Words, Let us pass from what He has said, to what He has done. What has He done for Sinners? Or rather, What has He

not

not done? For them He came from Heaven; for them He lived a painful life on Earth; for them He died upon the Cross. *Matth. 9. 13. I came not, says He, to call the Just but Sinners;* He came, because 'was necessary he should come: And therefore for their sakes, for whom it was most necessary, for them he principally came. He never was so kind to any, as to Sinners. All his Conversation was in their Company, He made it his chief business to oblige them, He followed them from place to place, He thought of nothing else but how to gain their love, He came with a design to enflame their hearts, He brought down fire from Heaven with him, and wisht for nothing more than that this fire might burn. His more than ordinary Kindness was in all occasions so visibly remarkable, that He was taken notice of, and pointed at: The Pharisees were scandaliz'd to see't. And in those days, it was his great Reproach; *Matth. 11. 19. He was too much a Friend to Publicans and Sinners.* All his while, alas! they little understood this Business upon Earth. His great Compassion of their Misery, was the occasion of his coming: And since their

their

their Indigence first brought him from above, it was no wonder the Relieving of it was his chief Employment here below. He came as a Physician to his dying Friends, whom He most dearly lov'd; and therefore took most care, and was the most concern'd, for those who were most dangerously sick. Thus did our God behave himself to Sinners. Thus did he love his Enemies; and treat them as his dearest Friends. Thus did He live to serve them, till at length He died to save them.

*S. Paul concludes from hence, We now have much more Hope than ever. Rom. 5. 10. For if when we were Enemies, we then were reconcil'd to God; undoubtedly we now have much more reason, being reconcil'd, to hope we shall be saved. If then, before he sent his only Son, God lov'd his Enemies so dearly as to send him: We may well conclude, that since He came amongst us, since He interpos'd betwixt us and his Father's Anger, since He died to reconcile us to Him, Rom. 8. 34. since He rose again, and at the right hand of his Father is our Advocate in Heaven making intercession for us; surely now our humble Supplications, join'd with his,*  
and

and offer'd *in his Name*, Jo. 14. 15. will for his sake be *much more easily* receiv'd. If *then* a Contrite and an Humble Heart was always so agreeable, He never would despise it; Will he ~~now~~ refuse it? If the Total Sum of all the horrid Crimes of Mankind during several Ages, if the Malice of them altogether, could not any way divert the course of overflowing Mercy; if it could not hinder Him from sending Jesus to redeem the World; How can we think, the Greatness of our Sins can hinder Him from having Mercy on us, when we heartily repent?

Let us therefore, once for all, humbly confess, and own our Fault. The Truth is; We are proud, and willing to excuse our selves. We are willing to lay the blame of our Impenitence at our Creator's door, and say; He will not pardon us; He will not give us Grace; He will not save us: When, if we well examine, we shall find the blame is always ours; We will not repent; We will not comply with his Grace; in a word, We will not be saved.

All we can say, in our defence, is that our sins are *great*, God will not look upon

upon such grievous Sinners as we are. I cannot say they are not great, or that we are not grievous Sinners: But, that therefore God will never look upon us, is as false as the Word of God is true. He hates the Sin, but loves the Sinner:

He hates the Leprosie, but loves the Leper: And as *S. Aug. Conf. lib. 8. cap. 3.* a Merciful Father, He rejoices more, at the Repentance of one Sinner, than the Innocence of ninety nine who do not stand in need of it.

Let us therefore, once again, humbly acknowledge, and confess our Fault. We only pretend our Leprosie is so inveterate, God will not suffer us to come into his sight, He will not cure us, He will not make us clean. The Truth is, we are so negligent, so stupid, so insensible of our condition, that though we now and then are terrified to see the Danger of it, nevertheless we will not make our Supplications to Him as we ought, We will not be cured, We will not be clean-

DAN-



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# D A N G E R O F D E L A Y.

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## S E C T. I.

*How apt we are to defer Repentance.*

**T**HAT we are, All of us, some time or other, betwixt this and Death, obliged under pain of Eternal Damnation, to rouse our sleepy souls from the bewitching Lethargy of Sin; is an important Truth, which no man can dispute. We All are fully satisfied, that if we live in the state of Sin, if our Affections are criminal, if our Hearts are divided betwixt Heaven and Earth; we must, before we Die, Repent and

E Mend,

Mend, or we are lost for ever. Luke 12. 3. Unless we repent, we shall All perish.

This we agree upon: Our difficulty lies not in the *knowing*, but in the *performing* of our Duty. When we discourse with our Selves in general terms, *what it is* we ought to do; the Debate soon comes to an Issue: But, as we descend to the particulars of *when* and *how*; We come not so easily to a Resolution, about the *Time*. We suppose that we are able, at our pleasure, to change our Hearts, subdue our Passions, and reform our Lives: But our Hearts, at present, are otherwise engag'd; our Passions are youthful, and very importune; our way of Life, though none of the best, is suitable to the common Maxims of the World; And what haste, I pray, to do just *now*, what may be done as easily another time, when ever we please? Besides, the present Circumstances are very particular: An abrupt Disengagement would now go very much against the hair: We had better, for a time, content our Passions, and bring them to a composition: When *this* or *that* Business is over, that we may more freely attend to the work of our Sal-

Salvation; when our Company changes; when we meet with a Conjunction of more favourable Circumstances; O! then we'll begin the New Man; bid Adieu to the follies of this World; and from that instant date the beginning of our journey towards Heaven.

Thus the Colour of Piety gives a reputation to the Delusion: We cover the popular Cheat with an agreeable disguise: And betwixt gratifying our Inclinations, on the one side, with a criminal condescendence, and pacifying the remorses of our Conscience, on the other side, with a plausible pretence of future amendment at a more convenient time; We make Virtue, in appearance, subscribe to our Vices, and counterfeit God's Hand to one of the worst Temptations of the Devil.

## S E C T. II.

*How dangerous it is to defer Repentance.*

**T**IS clear, we are not Masters and Disposers of our Time: Only He, who was the first Author of Time, who now conserves it, and who will one day put a final period to all Time; He, I say, and only He, disposes of it as he pleases.

Besides, the Changing of our Hearts is far above our single strength ; we are not able, by our selves, so much as to *begin* so great a Work, how then shall we able to *perform* it, at our leisure, whensoever we please ? S. Gregory assures us (and we know it well enough) *Ho. 12. in Ev.* that *God who promises to PARDON us, if we Repent ; has never promis'd us the TIME of our Repentance.*

'Tis true : we cannot but confess, (to the great shame of our Ingratitude,) that our Creator loves us far above our merit. If we look back from hence as far as the first Creation, and carry our serious thoughts through all the steps of Providence, we meet with nothing but remarkable instances of his good wishes towards us. Nay, if we yet look farther back from the first moment of this World into Eternity, we find Him, before the beginning of all Time, entertaining his Thoughts with the premeditation of our welfare ; And in the first page of his Eternal Accounts, we find the great Design of Man's Redemption, that stupendious Mystery of Mercy and Justice, the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : who held nothing so dear, no obligation so important, as our Sanctification ; even to the degree  
of

of laying down his Life for the advantage of that sacred Interest. See here, the Motives which we have to think He loves us ! Yet give me leave to tell you, He is not so fond of us, but that He can be angry at us, when He finds his Love neglected. Witness all those miserable Christian Souls, who *once* were happy in the same Testimonies of his Affection : Who thought, as we do, to reform their lives at a convenient season ; who suppos'd, as we do, that God's *extraordinary* Grace would never fail to be at hand, whenever they pleas'd to have occasion for it. Alas, poor Souls, they now are lodg'd in the flames of Hell for all Eternity ; and know, too late, that though God never fails to bestow his *extraordinary* Graces, where He finds a faithful correspondency of our Endeavours with his merciful Assistance ; yet He often shuts his Hand, if we withdraw ours. He does not *first* desert us : Yet, if deserted by us, 'tis no wonder if He treat us upon equal terms, and so desert us.

Wonder not, that God who is so infinitely good, can find in his heart to Abandon thus a Sinner, who stifles the remorses of his Conscience, who resists

the frequent inspirations which invite him to Repentance, who has always something else to do when he thinks of his Duty, always is so rude, so scornfully uncivil, in receiving all the Embassies of Peace which Heaven sends him; that every trifling Object which salutes his Fancy, every miserable creature, which a silly Passion recommends to him, is sure to have the preference, and be the first admitted.

How often does God court us, when we are alone, as it were carefully managing that favourable occasion, when it may be presum'd we are at leisure for his entertainment? But, alas! we are perhaps never less alone, than when we are alone: The Common Enemy of Mankind is then most busy to prevent the advantage of such a happy circumstance. How often He does apply himself to us, when any suddain Accident has cross'd our inclinations, when we have been disappointed in our intrigues, when we begin to find our labour lost in the pursuit of what we hunted after, when we sit down angry and affronted at the confusion of our mistake, almost ready to fall out with the World for having cheated us: then it is that He takes hold  
of

of this conjuncture; begins in a loving manner to expostulate with us; to exprobrate to us how treacherous a Friend we find the World to be; on the contrary, how constant and faithful a Friend He has been to us, from all Eternity to this moment; how ready he is, notwithstanding all that's past, to receive us with open arms into favour again, if we return sincerely to Him. And how do we hearken to all this? Why, truly, it passes away like a little Fit of melancholly; we were *then* in an ill humour; we are *now* glad 'tis over; and so we think no more on't. Whatever God speaks to our Hearts, is all out of doors; Our Hearts are shut against him, all the time; *Apoc. 3. 20. He stands at the door, and knocks;* and we neglect Him, letting Him *stand* and wait our leisure; We approve the Friendship of the World before his; And though we may have some slight thoughts of hearing Him some other time, yet for the present we flatly deny Him Entrance, and refuse Him Audience.

Let us now Consider a little; What pitiful Worms we are, who thus condemn the Almighty; Who He is, whom

we affront; What trifles we prefer before him: And we shall not wonder if at length He leave us, and desert us, with a Resolution never more to offer us these *extraordinary Favours*: *Jo. 8. v. 21. I go away, says He, and you shall Seek me, and you shall Die in your Sins.*

### S E C T. III.

*Reasons why Delay is so dangerous.*

**T**HAT I may discover, yet more clearly, the Extravagance of Sinners, who defer the entire Conversion of their Hearts from time to time, upon a vain Presumption of choosing their own time, when they please; I suppose, as a fundamental Principle, *1 Pet. 5. v. 5. that God gives Grace to the humble, and resists the Proud.*

He who values himself upon being Wise enough in the management of his salvation; who neglects the time which God's great Mercy offers him; who presumes He can, whene'er he pleases, choose the time of his Conversion; Such a Person, if ever he approach the Throne of Grace, comes in a disposition directly opposite to Reconciliation; he carries *Pride* bare-fac't in the very  
Front



Front of him; and the Address, he presents, is endorst with the very same fault which he begs pardon for.

A true Convert comes trembling, with a Heart truly *humbled* under the Omnipotent Hand of an offended Majesty; and such a Penitent will always find Favour; A Contrite and *Humble* Heart God never will despise; All his former Offences will pass for nothing; *Ezek. 33. 16. None of his sins He comitted shall be mention'd to him;* In the Day of his Conversion his Impiety shall never hurt him; What time soever God shall please to mark out to him, if he manage that, he is secure.

But if a Sinner carelessly reject God's inspirations, and from time to time neglect the opportunities He mercifully offers him; if he behave himself as if he thought his Time of Reconciliation were entirely at his own disposing; and upon this account, when he thinks fit, presents himself before the Throne of Grace; His very Coming in *this manner* is an Act of *Pride*, a Pride by which he dangerously presumes upon a more than ordinary Favour, such as he knows has been denied to many Thousands, who are damn'd for ever, for less Sins

than his, and less neglect of the Almighty ; a Pride, which is the greatest provocation that can be imagined, in as much as it abuses all his infinite Goodness, Longanimity, and Patience, not only to the utmost degree of contempt, but even to an impudent assurance of obtaining Mercy when we please, although we have so much, so often, and so long, contemned it. This is a sufficient Reason, why God may abandon such proud Penitents as often as He Pleases : and this Reason is attended with a sort of Obligation (if a man may term it so) incumbent upon Providence, if not always, at least generally and for the most part, to treat them according to their merit.

This Obligation arises from two Titles. God is the *Creator* of Man, and the *Redeemer* of Sinful man. The first gives Him the Prerogative of being the supreme and universal Lord and Master of the Universe ; under which Character it belongs to him to give Law to all the parts of it, and take such methods as may with a smooth and easy, yet strong and steady influence, promote and carry on the great Design of the Creation. Hence comes the Obligation

ligation of supporting the Credit, and maintaining the Authority of his Government, which sinks immediately and falls to nothing, if his too great Indulgence *always* tolerate the open violation of his precepts, joyn'd with all the indignities, affronts, and insolences, of a haughty Subject, that will not be reclaim'd but when he pleases, will not take the advantage of those favourable Opportunities which are so often offer'd him, but defers the *only necessary* Business of his life from time to time, upon a proud Presumption of being receiv'd at any hour whensoever he pleases. Nothing under Heaven can in this occasion keep up the Spirit and vigour of Discipline amongst us, and place the Fear of God before our eyes, but a just and severe Punishment, such as becomes the Indignation of an angry God abus'd, affronted, and condemn'd; which is, to treat us as we treat Him, leave us as He finds us, and flatly refuse us Audience when we make our supplications to Him.

This Motive, which arises from the Title of *Creator*, is abundantly sufficient; but yet the Title of *Redeemer* is a far more powerful inducement to the

the same rigour of Justice. The Creation of the World was but a small Ex-  
pence: A Word *said*, and the whole  
Work *done*. But the Redemption of  
sinful Man, the Extraction of him out  
of the profound Abyss of *Sin* and *Ma-  
lice*, was a more laborious Masterpiece  
of Mercy and Justice; it cost him his  
descent from Heaven, a painful life for  
many years upon Earth, and the last drop  
of his most precious blood upon the  
Cross. Having redeem'd us from the  
Devil, at so dear a rate, and having  
paid the utmost price of our Salvation,  
He has a strict Right to the Honour  
and Reputation of his Mercy; *Isai. 42.*  
*8. He is Lord of All, and his Glory He*  
*will not give to Another.* He is our  
Lord and Master; by *Redemptiou* All  
of us are His; He has paid the full  
Discharge of our Account; but He will  
not apply the value of this Payment to  
those persons whose *Pride* will ei-  
ther Challenge the Credit, or Share it  
with Him; He bestows it only where  
it may be evident, if not to all the  
World, at least to every Sinner's Con-  
science who receives the benefit, that  
nothing but the Power of Grace could

work

work so wonderful a Resurrection, and free him from the Servitude of Sin.

He who made our Hearts, cannot but know the temper of our Inclinations. He cannot but see how partial and unequal we are in our Judgments. If any thing be amiss with us, we presently begin to murmur and repine within our selves, as if God only were the Author of our failings. But if we succeed in any thing, that seems praiseworthy, either in the Sight of God or Man, we presently assume the reputation of it to our selves. Our Faith teaches us the contrary: And we seem to believe it. But yet, I know not how it is, our Pride which comes

into the World with us, *S. Bern. de ord. vit. & mor. instit.* That Vice which is the first we fight with, and the last we conquer, is so apt to work upon our Judgment, that

if we examine well, we cannot but observe, we always are a great deal more inclin'd to magnifie our own Endeavours, than to admire the Power of Grace. If God should never treat us as we merit; if He should never abandon those who from his Goodness take occasion to abuse it; We should grow insensible of

of our necessities; We should forget our Obligations to the Grace of our Redeemer; We should behave our selves as if we thought that *All is done by our High Hand, and not by the Assistance of our Lord.* Deut. 32. 27. This is one Reason, and a just one, why He is oblig'd (as I may say) in honour, if not always, at least generally, and for the most part, to refuse them Audience in a Time of their own choosing, Who during the time which He Thought proper for their purpose, never would vouchsafe to hearken to Him. Jo. 8. v. 21. *I go away, says he, and you shall Seek me, and you shall Die in your Sins.*

#### S E C T. IV.

*That we ought to begin immediately, without Delay.*

S. Greg.  
Hom. 12.  
in Evang.

**H**E who has promis'd **PARDON** to those who Repent, has never promis'd **TRUE REPENTANCE** to those who defer it. A man must be a Stranger to the ordinary course of Providence, who does not know that there are certain Times in which our God is kinder and more favourable.

avourable to us; when Clouds of Anger disappear; when Heaven seems to smile upon us; and the Almighty seems to meet half way the Prayers and Addresses of his people. 'Tis not that God is liable to any shadow of Inconstancy. He always is inclin'd to Mercy, and nothing but our Sins can force him to the Rigour of his Justice. Sometimes He showers down his Graces in a plentiful abundance; visits and inspires us with good *Thoughts*, good *Inclinations* to amend our lives; strongly and sweetly moves us; frequently and importunately presses and solicites us to true Repentance. But if we slight his favours, He withdraws them from us: Mercy neglected and abus'd gives place to Justice: And all those *great* and *extraordinary* Graces, which before abounded, are denied us; that we may, by this means, grow sensible of their Necessity and our Dependency, their Power and our Weakness.

“What Wise man is there  
 “in the World, who read-  
 “ing This, will not fear  
 “the *deferring* of his Con-  
 “version, though it were but for one  
 “day? Who knows, whether this shall

*Christ. Di-*  
*vinity. p. 2.*  
*c. 7. Sect.*  
*3. v. 35.*

"be the *last* day, or no; that ever  
 "God will call him? *Prov. ch. 1.* God  
 "says, *I call'd, and you refused to come;*  
 "I held out my hand, and you would not  
 "look towards me; and therefore I will  
 "FORSAKE you in your Extremity.  
 "He does not say, how many times  
 "He called; or how long He held out  
 "his hand. God says, I  
 "stand at the door, and  
 "knock: but He says  
 "not, how often. Al-  
 "mighty God is ready  
 "and bountiful to knock and call; but  
 "yet he binds himself to no time or  
 "space, but comes and goes at his plea-  
 "sure. And they who take not their  
 "times when they are offer'd, are ex-  
 "cuseless before his Justice, and do not  
 "know whether ever it shall be offer'd  
 "them again, or no: for that this thing  
 "is only in the Will and Knowledge  
 "of God alone; who takes Mercy  
 "where it pleases him best, and is bound  
 "to none. And when the prefixt time  
 "of calling is once past, Wo be to that  
 "party; for a thousand Worlds [per-  
 "haps] will not purchase it again.

This Reason is abundantly sufficient  
 to make us manage carefully the work of  
 our Salvation with fear and trembling; and  
 humble



humble our selves under the powerful hand of God ; Phil. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 6. without pretending to any *absolute* Security of our admittance whensoever we please. We are certainly damn'd, if we never ask pardon ; probably it may be yet time enough, if we ask it now ; And in concurrence of a *certain* ruine on the one side, with a *probability* of safety on the other, No Wise man will lose time to deliberate upon the choice.

Some will say, perhaps, 'Tis a severe Case, to Renounce all worldly Affections, and deny them what's most dear to them ; to declare war against the most violent of Passions ; and to undergo the hardship of perpetual service in the engagement ; if we have no *absolute* security of making Peace when ever we desire it. Had we an assurance of our Pardon, whensoever we ask it ; it were some encouragement to undertake a thorough Reformation of our lives. But, to renounce All, upon a hazard of gaining Nothing, is too cold an invitation to encounter so painful and laborious a Task.

O Man ! says S. Paul to the Romans, Ch. 9. 20. who art Thou, that thus repleyest against God ? Who are you, that dare presume

sume to article with Him, in this manner? Is it not enough, to have so frequently transgressed his Laws, so much contemn'd his Menaces, so long abus'd his Patience? Is it not enough to have idoliz'd the objects of your Passion? to have set up your Single self in opposition to all the dictates of Duty and Obedience? to have affronted the Omnipotent Hand, which (had not his Mercy held it) had long since sunk your miserable Soul to the Abyss of Hell? Is not this enough, unless the same Pride, which began your Misery, accompany also the Petition of your Pardon? Remember that *God resists the proud, and gives Grace only to the humble.* 1 Pet. 5. 5. Remember that he is a very proud Beggar, who will not ask an alms, except he be assur'd before hand of receiving it; And that God is so far from receiving that insolent Request of such a proud Petitioner, that (on the contrary) He openly declares he *hates* him: Eccl. 25. 4. *My Soul, says He, Hates a proud Beggar.*

Ah Christians! We must (if we hope for Salvation) we must come in another disposition. We must not lose time upon the debate, whether or no we have

a certain prospect of success. *Phil. 2. 12.* We must work our Salvation with fear and trembling; *1 Pet. 5. 6.* and humble our selves under the powerful hand of God. In this Conjunction we have nothing else to do, but flye in all hast to the Throne of Grace: *Hebr. 4. 16.* Every Moment is precious: Every Moment of Delay encreases the Danger.

The prodigal Son, whose imitation our Saviour recommends to us, proposing him as a great example of an humble Penitent, did not lose time in studying whether his Father would receive him or not; he did not before hand enquire into his Father's humour; how he stood affected to him? whether he were ready to admit him? or determin'd never more to look upon him? But, immediately, at his first coming to himself, he said, *Luke 15. 17. 18.* I will rise, and go to my Father, and say to him, Father, I have Sinn'd. So far was he from any absolute assurance of his pardon, and so sensible of his unworthiness; he did not so much as offer to demand a perfect reconciliation, but left himself entirely to his Father, to dispose of him, and do with him what he pleased: *V. 19.* Father, I am not worthy to be call'd your Son.

Alas!

Alas! What can we do in this condition? We must redouble our prayers which we have heretofore so often huddled over, with as much indifference and coldness, as if we were *afraid* lest God should *hear* us, and *assist* us with his Grace to *take up our Cross*, *deny our selves*, and *follow him*. Matth. 16. 24.

If after a month, a year, or more, we find no great effect of Mercy; we must still persevere firm in our Endeavours: The more we *fear* God's Anger, the faster we must *fly* to the Protection of his Goodness. We must not sink under the apprehensions of our Reprobation, but without disputing our Destiny, we must resolve, either to obtain pardon, or die in the demanding of it.

If the Almighty seem to take no notice of us: if He seem as it were to command us out of his sight; we have nothing else to say, *Jo. 6. v. 68.* but, *Lord, whither shall we go?* What way is there to fly from thine Anger, but by the speediest recourse we possibly can make to the shelter of thy infinite Goodness? We know, we deserve an Eternal Banishment from thy Presence: We know, we often have refus'd Thee Audience: We know, it was our common

said T An-

Answer, Prov. 3. 28. *Go, and Come again another time:* and therefore we know, we have no reason to complain, if now we are forsaken and abandon'd by Thee. But this is only what we deserve: 'tis only what we justly *Fear*: Thou nevertheless commandest us to *Hope* otherwise; And 'tis in compliance with this Command, Rom. 4. 18. that we *Hope even against Hope*. We come not to dispute about our Heaven or our Hell; We come not to capitulate upon the Articles of our Salvation; We only *fear* as we have reason, and *hope* as we ought; so that, setting aside the whole sollicitude of that Affair, we leave it entirely to thy Mercy. We come with a Contrite and Humble Heart; full of nothing but a sincere Sorrow for all our past Offences, joyned with a hearty Resolution never to offend thee any more: Except it may be an Offence for Sinners, such as we are, to continue in thy Presence; Which cannot be: No, no; though we should see thy Sword of Justice drawn against us, and thy Omnipotent Hand stretcht out to strike us dead at thy Feet, We will not quit the place, Job 13. 15. *Although Thou killest us, we will still Trust in Thee.* This

This is the Humble Heart, which charms our God; the Heart which He cannot refuse; *Pf. 50. Such a Contrite, such an Humble Heart He never will despise.* This is the only disposition that can make amends for the abuse of so much Goodness; and for the deferring our Conversion so long, upon a proud *Presumption* of Amendment when we pleas'd. Such an Humble Heart, as this, gives God no reason to be jealous of his Honour: His Hand appears manifestly in the management and *preparation* of it: *Exod. 8. 19. The Finger of God is here,* Such a Convert, as this, will never challenge any share in the Honour of his Conversion; but, admiring the Benefit, will resign the Honour, and humble himself so much the more in his presence Who made him what he is. But God *will* always have the Honour of the work; He *will* be Merciful when He thinks fit, and not allow proud Man to dispose of his Mercy; He *will* take his own time, and confound the presumptuous *Pride* of those, who (as if they were God's Master, rather than his servants,) make no doubt but they can choose a *Time* convenient, when they please.

Sinners, Deceive not your selves.  
Think

Think not that God is always equally dispos'd to hear us, whensoever we appoint our time of Audience. He will not suffer us to pretend to the honour of beginning our Conversion, and challenging his Greatest Graces, at our leisure. 'Tis true; He died to save us: But, though He died for our *Benefit*, He died for God's *Honour*; and will not part with any share of this Honour, to humour a proud Penitent. *Isa. 42. 8. He is Lord of All, and his Glory He will not give to Anothor. 1 Pet. 5. 5. He Resists the Proud, and only to the Humble he gives Grace in this World, Glory in the next.*

A

A

# Contrite Heart.

## SECT. I.

*Sorrow for our Sins.*

*Anton.  
das Cha-  
gas.*



“ My God ! God  
 “ of my Soul, my  
 “ Life, my Heart,  
 “ and All that is  
 “ within me ! I have sinned, O my God ;  
 “ I have offended Thee ; I have done ill  
 “ before the Face of Heaven and Earth.  
 “ Neither the Stars of Heaven, nor the  
 “ grains of Sand upon the Earth, are e-  
 “ qual to the boundless number of my  
 “ grievous sins.

Ah my dear God ! my *Maker*, my  
*Preserver*, my *Redeemer*, and my Only  
 Bene-



Benefactor, how it grieves me to  
have So offended Thee! "I am  
"much more troubled at my  
"great Ingratitude, than at the great-  
"ness of the Torments I deserve.

O that I could bewail with Tears of  
blood, the base unworthiness of my be-  
haviour to my *only* most Obliging, most  
Endearing, most Deserving Friend! A  
Friend who *always* lov'd me, even when  
I lov'd my silly *Humours* and his miserable  
*Creatures* more than *Him*; who *always*  
Lov'd me, even when I was his most  
Ungrateful Enemy; And notwithstand-  
ing All, still *Made* me whatsoe're I *Was*,  
still *Gave* me whatsoe're I *Had*, and still  
*Invited* me, nay even *Courted* me, with  
daily inspirations of his Grace, to Love  
Him above All Things. O that my  
Eyes were living Fountains of continual  
Repentance, to bewail my base Un-  
worthiness!

And yet although my bleeding Heart  
should burst out at my Eyes, my Grief  
would ne're be equal to my Grievous  
Sins; the *Guilt* of which is *infinite*, and  
infinitely greater than I'm able to con-  
ceive. Though I should weep with Tears  
of blood in every corner of the Earth  
where I have sinn'd; All that would ne-

ver wash away the Guilt or Scandal of my Crimes. There's nothing but the bleeding Sacrifice of the Unspotted Lamb of God; There's nothing but the Blood of JESUS dying for my sake upon the Cross; There's nothing else can reconcile me to the Sovereign Majesty which I have so provok't; There's nothing else can wash out the deep Stains of my unspeakable ingratitude.

This is that Mercy of my God, which the admiring World has Reason to call Great: That Mercy which is truly Great, not only in it's self, but Great to all that are Partakers of it. Ps. 50. Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy Great Mercy. Wash my poor soul from it's Iniquity, and Cleanse it from it's Sins. Sprinkle me only, with the blood of JESUS, and I shall be Cleans'd; Wash me with it, and I shall be whiter than Snow. Cast me not away from Thy Face; but look upon a Contrite and an Humble Heart, which (for the sake of Thy Beloved Son, with whom Thou art well Pleased: Matth. 17. 5.) I hope Thou wilt not despise; but that Thou wilt have mercy on me, O God according to Thy Great Mercy.

SECT.

## S E C T. II.

*Resolutions of Amendment.*

I *Have said: Now I Begin* Pl. 76. *A-las!* How often *have I said So*, and as often broke my word! And what Hope have I *Now* to keep it, more than any other Time? When I renew the doleful memory of my Relapses, how I tremble at the very Thought! To think how often, in a lukewarm Fit of Piety, I have imagin'd I was *Now* beginning to amend my Life; And yet how *Soon*, how *Easily*, how *Shamefully* hath every *suddain* Passion, every *sinful* Inclination, every *silly* Humour overcome my best and firmest Resolutions! Proud as I was, I *wondered* always at my *weakness*, and could scarce believe it, though I *Saw* it. Proud as I was, still went on in the same road; Still *fancied* it was *easy* to *Reform* when I *Resolv'd* upon't; And still excus'd my self, by laying all the fault upon my *Neighbours*, my *Employments*, or some other *Circumstances* of my Life. And yet, what *Place* soever I have liv'd in, whatsoever *Business* I have been employed in, whatsoever *Circumstances* have attended me

F 2

through

through all the several changes of my Fortune; I have always been the same *Frail Creature*, always unequally unfaithful to my word. What *Hope* then have I Now to keep it, more than any other Time?

Must I *Despair*? Yes, yes: 'Tis absolutely Necessary for me to *Despair* of my own Strength, that I may seriously begin to *Hope* in nothing else but Him who gives *Grace* to the Humble, and resists the Proud. 1 Pet. 5. 5. And may I by his *Grace* Persevere all my Life, improving each day more and more, in *This Despair*, which is the Reason why I *Hope* more now than any other Time.

O that I had long since *Despair'd* entirely of my own sufficiency, and plac'd my Confidence in nothing but the powerful assistance of his *Grace*; I should not then have been so Negligent so openly *Expos'd* on every side, to the continual surprises of my *Passions*. I should then have carefully employed the precious moments of my Time, either in *Studying* how to Meet my several *Dangers*, or *Forecasting* how to Avoid Them. I should then have *Prayed* as heartily, as men do in a Storm; who every moment fear to sink, and every moment

lift their trembling Hands and weeping Eyes to Heaven; the same *angry Heaven* whence They justly apprehend their fatal Ruine. Ah my God! how seldom have I *Prayed* so! And how often have I *Aske* Thy Grace as *Carelessly* as if I had no need of it!

My *Resolutions*, like my *Prayers*, hitherto have only been in *General terms*: That now I would *Reform my Life*; I would no longer be a *Slave to Passion and Humour*; I would now *Begin to be a Saint*; And, O! how I have been *asham'd to Think of all my Follies*! Alas! This very *Pride* which made me thus *asham'd*, was That which made me *Fancy*, 'twas an *Easy matter to Amend*; and therefore made me *Careless* in observing the *Particular Occasions* of my *Greatest Sins*, the *Remedies* which ought to be *applyed*, and the *Impediments* which ought to be *remov'd*. But since the sad experience of my weakness makes me wiser, I am now *resolv'd* it shall be the *chief Business* of my Life, to *watch and study* all the *Motions* of my *Heart*; What *Passions* are predominant; what *Inclinations* Second them; by what *Approaches* They gain ground; and by what *Means*, in This or That par-

icular Occurrence, They may be resisted, weakened, and subdued.

A Master Workman needs but now and then apply his Rule, because his *Habit* guides his skilful *Hand*. But I, Unskilful as I am, who only now *Begin* the necessary Art of Living well, and have so many years contracted an ill habit of neglecting all those Holy Precepts; I must now, not only in my *Morning-Recollection* carefully *Foresee* each Danger I am like to meet with in the *Day*; but frequently *Renew* those pious Resolutions; In *All* occasions *Consult* the Eternal Truth which came from Heaven to instruct me; And *Examine* seriously, if the *Employment* of my Thoughts, Words, Actions, and Desires, be *suitable* to so Divine a *Rule*.

All This I am *Resolv'd upon*, in Presence of my God, and the whole Court of Heaven. Help me, All ye Blessed Spirits, *Luke 15. 7.* who are *Joyful* witnesses of these my Holy Resolutions; Assist me now to make an humble Offering of them All before the Throne of Grace; *Hebr. 4. 16.* And join your Better prayers with mine, to beg a Blessing for Them; without which, although

though I daily water Them with pen-  
 nital Tears, they never will En-  
 crease, and bring forth Fruit. I have  
 said: Now I Begin. Have mercy on  
 me, O God, according to Thy Great  
 Mercy; Psal. 76. 11. For Such a Change  
 comes only from the Right Hand of the  
 Highest.

**Humble**

**Prayer**

**Confession**

**Exhortation**

**Conclusion**

**Intercession**

**Response**

**Final Verse**

**Final Verse**

# Humble Heart.

## SECTION I.

*The Necessity and Advantages of Humility.*

*S. Aug.  
lib de  
ver. rel.*

**A**LL our Saviour's Life and Conversation upon Earth, was a continual instruction for the mending of ours. But above all things, He particularly recommended to us the Example of his great Humility: Learn of me, says he, because I am humble of Heart; and you will find rest for your souls, Mat. 11. 29. The



S. I. *An Humble Heart.* 21

'The necessity of this incom-  
'parable Virtue is so great, *Rodri-*  
'that 'tis impossible, with- *guez. Par.*  
'out it to make any pro- 2. Tr. 3.  
'gress into a Spiritual life. *cb. 1.*

'Our Pride corrupts and ru-  
'ins all our Virtuous Actions, unless  
'Humility begin, continue, and con-  
'clude them.

'S. Gregory says, True Vir-  
'tue never grows in any Soul. *Rodri-*  
'but when 'tis nourisht by *guez. cb.*  
'its proper Root, which is 2.

'Humility. This plain com-  
'parison expresses very well its Nature,  
'and its Properties. 1. A Flower fades  
'and withers when 'tis parted from its  
'Root. 2. The Root is never better,  
'than when hidden in the Earth, and  
'trampled under foot. 3. A Tree is  
'longer liv'd, and yields more fruit, ac-  
'cording as the root of it is deeper, and  
'lies lower under ground.

'How much our Faith de-  
'pends upon Humility, the A- *Rod. cb.*  
'postle tells us, when he  
'speaks of casting down ima-  
'ginations, 2 Cor. 10. 5. every high-  
'thing that exalts its self against the  
'knowledge of God; and captivating  
F 5 every

very Thought to the Obedience of Christ. Man's Reason is but weak, and subject to mistake; and therefore a submissive Spirit is required; the want of which, has been the first beginning of all Heresies, and verified St. Paul's prediction, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2. 3. 7. That in the last days dangerous times will come, because Men will be Proud; despisers of good People; and ever learning but never coming to the knowledge of Truth.

The same Humility which guides our Faith, encourages our Hope: Rodr. c. 10. 11. Because the more we fear our weakness and diffide in our own strength, the more we have recourse to God, in whom we place our confidence: And thus 2 Cor. 12. 10. when we are weak, says the Apostle, we are strong. That is to say, when once we rightly understand our selves, and being thoroughly convinced of our infirmity, we seriously begin to hope in nothing but the assistance of God's Grace: Then 'tis that he himself begins to take in hand the management of our Affairs; provides for us in all our spiritual wants; supports, and guides

guides us, by a special Providence, in all our pious undertakings. 'Tis with us, as 'tis with Beggars who expose their Ulcers and their miseries; the more they lay them open in the publick view, the more they move our pity, and obtain more Alms of Charitable persons: So the more sincerely we confess, and with profound humility acknowledge, our extreme necessities, exposing them in presence of our God, the more we move him to compassionate our miserable State, and to bestow upon us more abundantly the riches of his Grace,

Humility, as it encourages our Hope so it improves our Charity. An humble Man perpetually considering his innumerable Faults and imperfections, the more he sees his great unworthiness, the more he wonders at God's patience, and is more inclin'd to love his Goodness above all things. Nothing

makes me better understand how good God is, *P. Craf-*  
than when I see with how *set. T. 2.*  
much patience he endures *Cor. 14.*

a Man, who is not able to endure himself. 'Tis he who is offended: I am the Offender, I, all Wickedness; and

hec

... Humble Heart. §. 2.  
he, all Holiness. As wicked as I am;  
I can't endure my self: As holy as he  
is, he suffers me with patience. I only  
see a small part of my Faults, and hate  
my self: He sees them all, and yet he  
does not cease to love me. I have such  
a horreur of my self, when I consider  
how inconstant and how frail I am;  
and yet I cannot perceive that God has  
any horreur of me. On the contrary,  
the more I humbly own my wicked-  
ness, the more obliging and endearing  
proofs he gives me of insuperable good-  
ness.

Our Humility preserves  
*Regr. ch.* and guards our Chastity.  
*3. Bernard* Saint Bernard does not fear  
to say, that even the Purity  
of the Blessed Virgin her self, had never  
been agreeable to God, without it. Be-  
sides it is not only necessa-  
*Corn. a* ry to preserve our Chastity;  
*Lap. in c.* but is the best and most ef-  
*1 ad Rom.* fectual Remedy that can  
be, to procure it. Luxury  
is the punishment of Pride; and Chasti-  
ty the Triumph of Humility. St. Hie-  
rom says, 'tis hard to find a Heretick  
that loves Chastity; although in his dis-  
courses he may seem to praise it, and pre-  
tend

tend to practise it. The reason is, because God gives grace only to the humble, and resists the Proud, 1 Pet. 5. 5. and where there is no Grace, there is no Chastity, but all Concupiscence. Hence comes the common saying of our Novellists, that Chastity is impossible; and 'tis no wonder that they think so; for it is so, to the Proud, and Graceless, who can ne're be truly Chaste, till they are truly Humble. They are given up by God to all uncleanness through the Lust of their own hearts, Rom. 1. 24. and 'tis but just, that if the Soul refuses due submission to God, the Body should be found, by his permission, as untractable and disobedient to such a Soul. Because, says St. Gregory, by Pride they prefer themselves before Men; by Luxury they soon become like Beasts.

A Man might easily go through all other Virtues, and observe Humility as necessary for the acquiring and preserving of them all. But what has been already said, suffices to convince us, that the most compendious method of aspiring to Perfection, is to make it our chief business to be truly humble. Tis

Tis enough to add, that  
 P. Crasset all our Virtues and good  
 T. 1. Actions, without Humili-  
 Lund. 3. ty, will never save us; and  
 del Aven. that all our sins and im-  
 perfections, with true Hu-  
 mility will never damn us; for as  
 soon as ever we are truly humble, all  
 our Vices leave us, and immediately  
 all Virtues take possession of our  
 Heart. My Soul! why are we then  
 discourag'd? Why do we despair?  
 Why are we now and then so melan-  
 choly when we think of all our im-  
 perfections and faults? if therefore  
 we have reason to despair, have we  
 not therefore reason to be humble?  
 Let us be so then; and we shall have  
 no longer any reason to despair. Let  
 us but humble our selves in presence of  
 our God, we shall soon obtain all that  
 we have not; we shall be able to do  
 all that we cannot; and we shall re-  
 ceive all that we deserve not. You  
 cannot fast? At least you can humble  
 your self. You cannot weep for your  
 sins? Humble your self, because you  
 cannot. You have not time enough,  
 nor Health enough, to say much Pray-  
 ers? However you may be as hum-  
 ble.

ble every jot, as if you had. Do what you can, you always pray with much distraction? Be content, and humble. You are now and then surpris'd, and fall into some sin? Have patience: take more care another time: and be more humble ever after.

*An Humble Heart* God never will despise. Psal. 50. And is not This enough to shew us the Necessity and great Advantage of Humility? How comfortable is the Thought of it, to them whose want of health, or other Circumstances, will not suffer to make use of corporal Austerities, in Satisfaction for their Sins! What Comfort is it to them, to reflect that still they have a Refuge left them in the Sanctuary of this Virtue. 'Tis the only One they have, if we believe an ancient Father of the Church. *St. John.*

*Whoever has committed* *Clima.*

*grievous Sins; and has a* *Recapitul.*

*Body weak and Sickly; Let* *Ar. 35.*

*him tread the footsteps of Humility: In all things let him follow, where the Spirit and the impulse of that Virtue lead him: 'Tis the only way he has to save his Soul.*

## S E C T. II.

## First Degree of Humility.

**T**HE first Degree, is  
*Rod. ch. 5.* to have a mean Opin-  
 'nion of our selves; to  
 'think our selves contemptible; and  
 'judge that we deserve to be despis'd by  
 'all the World. The Knowledge of  
 'our selves, our Weakness and, our  
 'Misery, is no Humility; but only  
 'is the necessary Means to come to this  
 'Degree of it.

'A Person truly humble,  
*Rod. ch. 3.* always has before his  
 'eyes his own defects and  
 'imperfections: in others he considers  
 'chiefly the perfections and virtues  
 'which he finds: and thus he always  
 'is perswaded that his Neighbours are  
 'much better and more perfect than  
 'himself. He loves them with respect  
 'and tenderness. He is not angry at his  
 'being valued less than they; but glad  
 'to see them *All* preferr'd before  
 'him.

'His Sins, which ever  
*Ib. Ps. 50.* are before him, make him  
 'sensible that he deserves  
 'the



the worst of punishments; and therefore whatsoever happens to him, he esteems it infinitely less than his iniquity deserves. He never thinks himself affronted. Whatsoever wrong is done him; he receives it as a favour, in comparison of what he has just reason to expect. He suffers all, in silence, upon this account: And far from breaking out into complaints, he only calls to mind that humble saying, of the Prophet Micha, 7. 9. *I will bear the indignation of my God, because I have sinn'd against him.*

The hardest measure we can suffer in this *Rod. ch. 7.* life; the greatest and the most severe humiliations we can think of, are incomparably less than what is due to any single crime, which we commit against the Majesty of God. Can we imagine, all the World is able to dishonour him *too much*, who has dishonour'd God himself? And is't not just, that having slighted and neglected his Creator, he himself should be despis'd by *All*, and live for ever after in disgrace? Remember that a Sinner is a *Child of wrath*, Ephes. 2. 3. an Enemy of God, a Monster of deformity,

'formity, condemn'd to everlasting  
 'flames: Remember this; and you  
 'will shrink below the feet of all the  
 'World; because you will be then  
 'convinc'd, that howsoever you are  
 'humbled and oppress'd, a Man who  
 'has but once offended God, deserves  
 'to suffer more.

'Although my Conscience  
*Rodr. ibid.* 'accuse me not, Though I  
 'know nothing of my self,  
 'says the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 4. yet I am  
 'not hereby justified; but he that judges  
 'me, is God. When we consider well,  
 'how doubtful our Condition is, and  
 'how we always are uncertain of our  
 'being justified: This, this alone,  
 'without all other motives, which are  
 'numberless, is of it self abundantly  
 'sufficient to humble us. What Chri-  
 'stian is there, that would dare to shew  
 'his face? or Man that would not ra-  
 'ther wish to sink into the bowels of  
 'the Earth, to hide himself? if this re-  
 'flection once had made a deep impres-  
 'sion in his Mind, My Crimes are cer-  
 'tain, but my Pardon is uncertain. No-  
 'thing can be more uneasie to a Soul,  
 'that would be sav'd, than this Uncer-  
 'tainty. But yet there's nothing in the  
 'World

World of greater use for the acquiring  
and preserving of Humility. There's  
nothing can refrain us more from Cen-  
suring our Neighbours, or Despising  
even those who seem the greatest Sin-  
ners; than to think, that We our-  
selves are far from having any certain-  
ty of being in the State of Grace; and  
that this very moment we may be,  
for ought we know, in equal danger  
of the everlasting flames of Hell.

### S E C T. III.

#### *Second Degree of Humility.*

THE Second Degree,  
is when we love to Rod. ch. 13.  
be neglected, and desire  
to be despis'd. As hard as it appears,  
if we were once well grounded in the  
first Degree, the way would then be  
short and easie to the second. If we  
had but once a mean Opinion of our  
selves; if once we truly thought our  
selves contemptible; if once our  
judgment were convinc'd that we de-  
serve to be despis'd by All the World;  
it would not then be difficult to suf-  
fer their contempt: We then should  
even wish for such occasions of im-  
proving our humility: they would  
be

'be always very welcome to us, and  
 'afford us, every day, new joy and  
 'consolation. 'Tis certain, says St. Bo-  
 'naventure, that we naturally love to see  
 'our sentiments approv'd, and our opi-  
 'ons follow'd. Which if it be true, as  
 'our experience too often teaches us, why  
 'are we so uneasie when we see our neigh-  
 'bours undervalue us? 'Tis questionless,  
 'because we are not, in our judgment,  
 'thoroughly convinc'd that we deserve to  
 'be despis'd; for if we were, we should  
 'be glad to see our Neighbours follow our  
 'Opinion.

'The Dispositions which  
 Red. ch. 14. 'make way to this De-  
 'gree, are, 1. to shun  
 'as much as may be, all occasions of  
 'praise. 2. To suffer patiently the hu-  
 'mours and insults of others. 3. To  
 'take no pleasure in our being celebra-  
 'ted and admir'd.

Ibid. 1. 'The avoiding all oc-  
 'casions of praise is re-  
 'commended to us by the  
 'great example of our Saviour, and the  
 'universal practice of the Saints. Our  
 'Saviour fled from those who thought  
 'to choose him King. He shew'd his  
 'Glory on Mount Thabor to no more  
 'than

than three of his Disciples; and immediately charg'd them, not to say a word on't. Whensoever his great Charity appear'd in doing Miracles, his great humility appear'd no less in his commanding secrecy.

'Humility affects not to appear in her own likeness. She forbears expressions which discover her. She desires, not only to conceal all other Virtues, but particularly, to conceal her self.

'Tis a dangerous thing to speak of ones self; either well, or ill: if well, 'tis to appear *deserving*; if ill, 'tis to appear *humane*.

*P. Crasset.  
T. 1. Mar. 3.  
de l' Avent.*

An humble Man had rather hear another say, *that he is miserable, inconsiderable, good for nothing*; than be heard to say it of himself. At least, he never contradicts it. Whosoever says it, he believes it firmly, and is therefore glad that others are of his opinion.

*S. Fr. Sales.  
p. 3. c. 5.*

Rod. ch. 14. 2. If we seriously consider'd, that the esteem of Men, is generally, if not always, an Occasion of Presumption and Pride; and that the Saints themselves, who by God's Grace were more secure from danger, always fled from such temptation, even with aversion and horror: we should certainly conclude, that whatsoever may contribute to the humbling of us, and inducing us to have a mean opinion of our selves, should be receiv'd with patience, and embrac'd as useful means of purchasing, preserving, and encreasing our Humility. The opportunities of practising this Virtue are so frequent every day, that if we did but carefully forecave to profit by them, we might almost make it our continual Exercise. It

B.III.ch.49 happens, says the Devout Kempis, that what is pleasing to others, shall go well forward; that which thou wishest, shall not speed: That which others say, shall be heard; what thou sayest, shall be nothing regarded: Others shall ask, and shall receive; thou shalt ask, and not obtain: Others shall be great in the praise of Men;

Men; but of thee there shall be no speech: To others this or that shall be committed; but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this, Nature is apt sometimes to be troubled; and 'tis much, if thou art humble enough, to bear it patiently with silence.

3. To be charm'd so little with Esteem and Honour, as *Ibid.* to take no pleasure in them, is a third step to the height of this Degree; much harder than the other two. For as Saint Austin very well observes, although it may be easie for a Man to live without praise, when it is denied: is hard enough for any Man, to take no pleasure in it, when 'tis freely offer'd him. A Proud Man, says St. Gregory, joyces even when he knows that his admirers are mistaken in him. For he cares not what his Life is in the sight of God, but only values the appearance of it in the sight of Men. And therefore he is puffed up with the least applause: He fancies he has reapt the fruit of his endeavours: He desires no more: He aims at nothing else. But, on the contrary, an humble Man is so averse from the applause of Men, that he's uneasy with it. He's afraid there is  
no

'no real ground for it: or else he fears  
 'the loss of his Reward in Heaven, by  
 'receiving of it here; and trembles at  
 'the apprehension of exchanging, for  
 'a little popular Esteem, the Crown of  
 'everlasting Glory, which he hopes  
 'for. Solomon says, Prov. 27. 21. *As*  
 '*Gold is tried by the Furnace, so is a*  
 '*Man by his Praise.* St. Gregory adds;  
 'if he grows vain by hearing it, he's like  
 'false Gold, which suffers by the fire:  
 'but if the hearing of it makes him trem-  
 'ble, least it may be prejudicial to his  
 'Soul before the Sovereign Judge; 'tis  
 'like a fire which only serves to purify,  
 'and give him a new lustre. We should  
 'be so grounded in the knowledge of  
 'our selves, that when we are com-  
 'mended, we may always have before  
 'our eyes our base Unworthiness; and  
 'be so much the more ashamed, to  
 'think, we are so far from being what  
 'we seem to be; that we fall short of  
 'being, even what we should be.

By these three Steps  
 Rod. ch. 15. 'we come at last to the  
 'Degree of *loving and de-*  
 '*siring* to be undervalued and despis'd:  
 'We become, not only humble in our  
 'Judgment, but our Heart. The first  
 'degree



degree, which is Humility of *Judgment*, was not to be found in J. C. as *St. Bernard* well observes; because He knew himself too well, to have a mean *opinion* of himself, or *think* himself contemptible, or *judge* that He deserv'd to be despis'd by all the World. But the second Degree, the true humility of *Heart*, was the Humility of our Redeemer. He took *pleasure* in descending, and becoming Man: He lov'd to be neglected, scorn'd, and ridicul'd: He heartily *desir'd* to undergo all injuries, insults, and outrages. Behold the Example of our Master. See the Lesson which he came to teach us, *Matth. 11. 29.* *Learn of me*, says he, *because I am humble of Heart.*

A true Disciple of Christ, is dead to all things in this *Ibid.* World; he hates it, and detests it; he desires not to be valued and esteem'd in't; but embraces all Humiliations with the self same passion, which worldly Persons have for Honour and Esteem; and is as glad to meet with all occasions of appearing inconsiderable and contemptible, as they

they are *overjoy'd* to meet with opportunities of seeming Great.

To know if we are true  
*Rodr.* Disciples of our Master, and  
*ch. 16.* have perfectly acquired this  
 Virtue; we must, by this  
 Rule, examine well the disposition of  
 our Heart, and see if we rejoice as  
 much at being undervalued and de-  
 spis'd, as others do at being honour'd  
 and applauded.

This Examen is the Touch-  
*ibid.* stone of Humility. For 'tis a-  
 greed upon by all, that Vir-  
 tue is imperfect in us, till we practise  
 it with satisfaction and pleasure. If  
 we find the least repugnance in the  
 practice, when occasion serves; and  
 use much preparation to surmount the  
 difficulty of it; 'tis indeed the way to  
 acquire such Virtue, but it also is a cer-  
 tain mark, we have not yet acquired  
 it in perfection. A Master of an Art,  
 as *Aristotle* says, has such a Habit of  
 it, that he uses no deliberation, but  
 performs the operations of it with  
 such ease, he scarce knows what he's  
 doing when he does his work. And  
 Philosophers tell us, that in surprizing  
 Accidents, we act not by Reflection,  
 but

but by Habit. For which reason, 'tis in vain to examine, what our Inclinations are (and whether we are truly humble, or no) by what we do with preparation and leisure: We must carefully Examine what we suddainly are apt to do, without deliberation.

However, if by this Examen we observe, that notwithstanding our Endeavours to improve, we frequently are importun'd, and sometimes overcome by Pride and Vanity; if we are yet so far from taking pleasure in the practice of Humility, that we are hardly able to support in silence the uneasiness we suffer in it: Let not this discourage us; but on the contrary, the more we see our weakness, let it humble us the more; and let us learn from thence, to use our utmost diligence in laying a more firm Foundation of Christian Humility, which is *Humility of Heart*. 'Tis not a thing impossible. For, by the grace of God, we may be able, says St. *Austin*, not only to imitate the Example of the Saints, but also of the Sovereign Master of the Saints. He invites us all to imitate his Virtue; and can we fancy he invites us to a thing impossible?

*Learn of me,* says he, *because I am Humble of Heart.* And S. Hierom very well observes, that those words of our Saviour, *Mat. 19. 21. If thou wilt be Perfect, come and follow me,* are a manifest conviction, that by his Grace (which always is at hand,) we have it in our Power, to be Perfect, if we will.

## S E C T. IV.

*An Objection Answered.*

*Rodr. cb. 29.* IF Charity incline us to desire our Neighbour's good, and so contribute what we can to their Salvation; why should our Humility desire that all the World may undervalue us? Without their thinking well of us (in some capacity, or other) we shall never do them any good; they never will confide in us; they will not hearken to us; we shall have no credit with them. Is it not therefore reasonable, even by the Rule of common Charity, that we should rather seek their Kindness and Esteem, than their Aversion and Contempt?

S. Gregory answers. 'Tis one thing to desire our Neighbour's Esteem; another, to rejoice

S. 4. *An Humble Heart.* 141

joyce at his Profit. 'Tis a Crime to cover Reputation for its own sake, and rejoyce at being Great in the opinion of Men. But yet, to wish as much of it as may be necessary for so good an End as that of serving Souls, and gaining them to Christ; is an effect of Charity. And thus 'tis lawful to desire our Neighbour's good opinion and esteem, *so far as may enable us to do them good*: because we *thus* desire it, only for their service, and the greater glory of our God, with a sincere and total disengagement from the charms of Pride and Vanity. If any Man, who naturally *hates* a Potion, or a Pill, upon occasion procures it, and *desires* to take it, we may be assur'd that such a Man takes Physick, not for Physick sake, but purely for his health. So when a Man, who by an extraordinary grace of the Almighty, *hates* the applause and honour of this world; when such a Man procures, *desires*, and manages with care, the good Opinion of Men; because it may be useful to him in their service; we may be assur'd he only seeks God's Honour, not his own.

However, this great Truth  
*Ibid.* is generally much abus'd;  
 and under the pretence of  
 it, we only cover our Ambition, and  
 disguise our Vanity. We cover Ho-  
 nours, seek Preferments, and intrude  
 our selves into Employments, letting  
 slip no opportunity of *being or appear-*  
*ing* Great; and all this while, we  
 plead; 'tis only *Charity*, to qualifie us  
 for the better service of our Neighbours.  
 We have therefore need of no small  
 'circumspection to discern the cheat.  
 The way to know it, says St. Gregory,  
 'is to examine all *occasions*, where our  
 'Reputation is a thing *indifferent*, and  
 'useless to our Neighbour. If in these,  
 'we care not for the good Opinion of  
 'Men; we may suppose, that when  
 'we are concern'd for it, it is only for  
 'our Neighbour's sake, and not our  
 'own.

St. Gregory thus unties the  
*Ibid.* knot; but St. Francis cuts it  
 with more ease, and much  
 more clearly takes away the difficulty.

Whatsoever the *Occasions*  
*Ibid.* are, He roundly answers:  
 'that our *Charity* begins at  
 'home: that if it inclines us to desire  
 our

our Neighbour's spiritual good ; with much more reason it inclines us to desire our Own : that if our Reputation may be useful to our Neighbour ; our Disgraces and Humiliations (incurred without our fault) may prove more beneficial to our selves. If when I preach, says he, or when I practice any virtue which is edifying, I am pleas'd with praises, which endanger my Salvation ; because their good Opinion of me, helps them to improve by my instruction, and example : How much reason have I, for my own sake, to rejoyce a great deal more, when (having done my best) I still am undervalued and despis'd ; because, by this means, I my self am more acceptable to God, and more secure of my Eternal Happiness ?

Our Saviour himself, whose Charity inclin'd him to descend from Heaven, and to sacrifice his life for Sinners ; knew that many unbelieving Souls were lost by undervaluing and despising him ; He knew that many millions of them would have been converted, if they had admir'd and honour'd him as he deserv'd ; and yet He

*See Rodr. ch. 29.*

never sought for worldly Honour as a  
 means to save them; but although their  
 Souls were dear to Him, his honour  
 was not. As He came from Heaven,  
 not to do his own will, but the will of  
 him that sent him, Joh. 6. 38. So he  
 came to seek the Honour of his Fa-  
 ther, not his own. Joh. 8. 49, 50. I  
 honour my Father, says He: I seek not  
 my own glory. 'Tis enough that whilst  
 'I only seek his Honour, he takes care  
 'of mine; and that although I never  
 'seek my own, yet there is One that al-  
 'ways seeks & judges it; v. 50. and always  
 'will be sure to do me justice. Let us  
 'follow the Example of our Saviour, Let  
 'us make it the chief Business of our life  
 to do the will of him that sent us, not  
 our own. Let us honour our Father in  
 Heaven. 'Let his Honour only be the  
 'Object of our care, and never let us  
 'mind our own, but rest content that He  
 'he himself takes care of it. Let no  
 appearance of our Neighbour's Profit  
 cheat us into an Ambition of being po-  
 pular; but let us faithfully, in all things  
 do our Duty for the Love and Honour  
 of our God; and as for Mens opinion  
 of us, let us leave it to his Providence.  
 His Honour, here below, is left (as I  
 may



may say) to our discretion: He commits it to our care: He forces not our Liberty, but only offers the assistance of his Grace, and lets us Honour him, and serve him as we please. Shall God thus trust his Honour in so bad a hand as ours? And shall not we be satisfied, to trust our honour in so good a hand as his?

## SECTION V.

### *Third Degree of Humility.*

THE Third and Last Degree, *Poor.* is the *Humility of Saints*, who are most humble in the sight of God, when they are most esteemed and celebrated by the World.

When a person full of Faults and Imperfections, has a mean Opinion of himself; esteems himself no better than he is; and is content to be reputed such as he esteems himself; We may commend him, says St. Bernard; but have little Reason to admire him. Who admires to see a poor Man have a mean Opinion of his Riches? think himself no richer than he is; and rest content that others think so too; but if a Rich man rank himself amongst the Poor, and treat them with

respect, as if he were the least considerable of them all; this very well deserves our admiration.

By this description of the third Degree, we plainly see, that the Humility of Saints and the Humility of Sinners is the same in substance, though they differ in Perfection. 'Tis true; we wonder not, to see a man stand steady upon even ground. But when we see the same man stand as firm upon a lofty Pinnacle; we gaze, and wonder at him. All this while, the Man's the same; though we admire him more, because the Place is higher, and the difficulty greater. So 'tis in our present case. Humility is either of the Judgment or the Heart. The third degree is comprehended in the first, and second; but however we admire much more an humble Saint; because his eminent degree of Sanctity is higher, and the difficulty of his being humble; therefore seems much greater.

I say seems greater, because I am not apt to think it is so; upon second thoughts. My reason, in short, is this; Humility of judgment and of heart, are chiefly grounded in the knowledge of our selves, and Love of God. The first induces

induces us to have a mean opinion of our  
selves; the more we know our selves,  
the more we think our selves contemp-  
tible, the more we judge that we de-  
serve to be despis'd by all the World.  
The second makes us glad to be neg-  
lected, and desire to be contemned;  
And as the Love of God encreases in our  
Hearts; the more we hate and scorn  
the transitory honour of this World;  
the more we love to follow the Example  
of an humble God, the more we hear-  
tily desire to be agreeable to none but  
him, as being every day more sensible  
of this great Truth; he only is approv-  
ed whom God commends, 2 Cor. 10. 18.

Let us only lay these notions right to-  
gether. 1. The Knowledge of our selves  
and Love of God, is that which makes  
Men Saints. No Person ever was a  
Saint without them; no Man ever was  
a Sinner with them: And the more  
this Knowledge and this Love encrease,  
the greater is the Sanctity. 2. This  
Knowledge and this Love is that which  
makes Men humble; Knowledge helps  
them to be humble in their Judgments;  
Love assists them to be humble in their  
Hearts: The more they know and  
Love, the greater is the assistance of  
God's

God's Grace, which is the only means of making all things easie to us. Why then may we not conclude? Whoever is a Saint, the greater Saint he is, the easier 'tis for him to be humble.

Sinners indeed have much more matter for Humility to work upon. Their Weakness, their Corruption, and the Misery of their deplorable condition, are incomparably worse. But, which is worst of all, they are so miserably blind, as not to know their Misery. A Beggar, in his drink, imagins he's a Prince, and is as proud as if he were. 'Tis true, he's miserably poor, but since he knows it not, what signifies it? He's as proud as if he were the Richest man alive. 'Tis so with Sinners. They are drunk with Self-love, Pride and Vanity. They little know, and much less think, how Poor, how Miserable, how Contemptible they are. And we may very well apply to them those words of the Apocalypse, Ch. 3. 17. 18. *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: Therefore I counsel thee, to anoint thy Eyes, that thou mayest see.* This is the general Reason why Humility

Humility is harder to be found in Sinners than in Saints. The First have more to humble them; but the more they have the blinder they are, and the less they know it. The second have less to humble them; but the less they have, the more their Eyes are open by God's Grace, and the more clearly they discover what's enough to make them fear and tremble all their life.

## SECT. VI.

*First Reason, why the greatest Saints are the most humble.*

I Shall only add two Reasons more, because all Saints (I speak of such as are now living) are compriz'd in these two Classes: They are either such as have been Sinners heretofore; or such as may be so hereafter.

The first Reason is so universal, that it comprehends them both; but more particularly, those who have preserv'd the Innocence of their Baptismal Grace. 'Tis gather'd from that Oracle of

Scripture, *Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you to will and*

to do, according to his pleasure. *Phil.*  
*lip.* 2. 12, 13. See the unsearch-  
 'able Abyſs of the Almighty's Judg-  
 'ments! where 'tis dangerous to dwell  
 'too long, and ſearch too curiouſly,  
 'leſt it caſt us into an exceſs of fear.  
 'Tis enough, that none are ſaved, but  
 'who perſevere to the end; and that the  
 'greateſt Saints can never be aſſured of  
 'their Perſeverance, 'Tis a ſpecial Gift  
 'which the Apoſtle chiefly points at,  
 'when he ſays, *Rom.* 9. 18. 16. God has  
 'mercy on whom he will have mercy. It is  
 'not of him that wills, or him that runs;  
 'but of God that ſhews mercy, And again,  
 'Eph. 2. 8, 9. By Grace you are ſaved; and  
 'that not of your ſelves; it is the Gift of  
 'God, not of works, leſt any Man ſhould  
 'boaſt. Alas! how is it poſſible for any  
 'Saint to be aſſured of his condition for  
 'the future, ſince he is not certain even  
 'of his preſent State? Who can ſound  
 'the bottom of our Hearts? or rather,  
 'who can ſound the Heart of God, and  
 'tell us what he thinks of our condition?  
 'Who is he that can aſſure us, we are  
 'good enough to be rewarded by him?  
 'we be to that life, how innocent ſoever,  
 ſays *St. Auſtin*, which he Judges without  
 'Mercy, *Pſal.* 19. 12. Who is he, ſays  
 'David,

David, that can understand his fail-  
ings? Cleanse me from my secret faul-  
es, O Lord; Plal. 142. 2. and enter not  
into judgment with thy servant; for in  
thy sight shall no man living be justified;  
if once Thou judgest him according to  
the utmost rigour of thy Justice. Who  
is there that does not tremble, when  
he hears the Just and Holy man, whom  
God himself was pleased to praise, con-  
fess that, all his life time, God was such  
a Terror to him, he was hardly able to  
endure it? Job 31. 23. Who can, with-  
out trembling, hear the Prophet Isaiah  
tell us, 64. 6. we are all unclean; and  
all our righteous works, like filthy Rags?  
Or hear S. Hierom, in the life of S.  
Hilarion, tell us how that blessed Saint  
was terrified at the approach of Death,  
and to encourage his departing soul,  
said to himself; Go forth, my Soul; what  
art thou now afraid of? Thou hast ser-  
ved thy God these threescore and ten years;  
and dost thou tremble now to appear be-  
fore him?

Let us therefore fear and tremble in  
the way to Heaven. Never let us fan-  
cy, we are so advanc'd in Virtue, that  
we need not fear. The greatest Saints  
were never so Presumptuous, as to ba-  
nish

nith from their thoughts the *Fear* of God. *Philip. 2. 12.* They *workt out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* They were always full of *Fear* : and this *Fear* always *Humbled* them. They were not *Blinded* as we are, with *Passion* and *Humour* ; but, as they improv'd in *Grace*, they every day discover'd more and more their secret *Imperfections*.

The *Property* of *Grace* is to *enlighten* the understanding, as well as to *enflame* the Heart. It makes us *Know* our *Misery*, and *Love* our *God*, who only can deliver us. These two *Effects* of *Grace* were lively represented on the *Day of Pentecost*, by that mysterious *Fire* which rested on the heads of the *Apostles*. *Fire* gives *Light* and *Heat* : and as the *Fire* encrease, it affords more *Heat* and greater *Light*. So, *Grace* *Enlightens* and *Enflames* the *Minds* and *Hearts* of *Saints*, with *Knowledge* of themselves, and *Love* of *God* : and as their *Grace* improves, this *Heat* and *Light* encrease : They discern more clearly the innumerable dangers that surround them, and become more *Humble* under the *Almighty Hand* of *God*. 1 *Pet. 5. 6.*

2. *S. Paul* compares the different *States* of *Sin* and *Grace*, to *Light* and *Darkness*,



ness, Night and Day. Rom. 13. 12. 13. The Night says he, is spent; the Day is at hand. Let us cast off the works of Darkness, and put on the armour of Light. Let us walk honestly, as in the Day. A Traveller benighted, walks he knows not where. He hardly sees his Hand; much less his Feet. He sees perhaps, some Stars shine through the Clouds, whose sparkling light serves only to amuse him, and mislead him to a Precipice. But when the rising Sun appears, the Stars immediately vanish out of sight; our Traveller no longer gazes there; but has a much more useful prospect, of the Earth below him; where he plainly sees the Ground he goes upon, the Risings, the Descents, the Inequalities, and Precipices of it. Sinners, like benighted Travellers, march blindly on; mind little what they Do; and much less where they Go. However, now and then they practise some good actions, either out of custom, or good nature; and amuse themselves with some few semblances of virtue, whose dim lustre seems perhaps more sparkling in the Darkness of that Night, which hides them, even from themselves. But this  
not

not so with Saints. Their Night is spent ; their Day appears. The Sun of Justice Rises in their Hearts, 2 Pet. 1. 19. Their Virtues, like the Stars, (which only shine in Darknes) disappear immediately. The Clay which they are made of; the Corruption of their Nature; the Enormity of Sin; the Power of their Passions; and the Weakness of their Reason: These are Motives of Humility, which Now they clearly see, and dayly have before their eyes. Besides all This; they plainly see an infinite variety of Artifices and Disguises of Self-love, which easily assumes all shapes, and counterfeits all Virtues, even Charity it self. And therefore they suspect the best of all their Actions; trembling at the very thought of them, for fear they may be secretly corrupted by Self-love. But, above all, the importunity of Pride, which never ceases to attack them; but continually endeavours to surprise them (notwithstanding all these Motives of Humility) is that which seems the most extravagant of all their faults; and humbles them the most.

Behold the Misery of Man! And, what can be more miserable, if the Sight

Sight of so much misery suffices not to humble him! the greatest Saint, who is not conscious to himself of any forfeiture of his first Innocence, has no Assurance of his being justified. 'He may be in the State of Grace; 'but whether so, or not, He *D. Sp.* 'cannot tell. And, which is *ch. 27.* 'worse, although he knew it, 'He has no Assurance of *Preserving* 'one single moment. He who Stands, 'may Fall: and He who is a Saint, 'may prove a Sinner. Nothing but 'God's Grace is able to support him, 'to the End: and the continuance of this 'Grace requires so faithful and so punctual a Cooperation with it; that a 'very small Omission oftentimes suffices 'to deprive him of it. His Perseverance 'is, as it were, a Chain of Graces, 'linkt together, and continued to the 'utmost period of his life: and this is 'more than He can Merit. 'All that he can do, is to *S. Tho. 1.* 'be always *vigilant* and *2. q. 114.* 'faithful in the Use of e- *9.* 'very single Grace God 'offers him. One Grace, well us'd, 'draws on another; This, a third; and 'That a fourth: but if he trip the least

in his Fidelity, the Chain immediately breaks. And this is that great Diligence which the Apostle recommends to earnestly to all good Christians, *Use Diligence*, says he, *to make your Calling and Election sure.* 2 Pet. 1. 10. For if you do, you shall never fall. I must confess, this Saying is extremely comfortable; if we do: But, if we do not, what becomes of us? If all our life, we *Use such Diligence*; the Apostle tells us, we shall never fall: But, if we do not; what remains, but that the greatest Saint amongst us will be sure to fall? Consider this; and Tremble, whoso'er you are. Assure your self, the more you are a Saint, the more you'll tremble, and the more you'll see, how terrible a Truth this is; which is one Reason why the greatest Saints (who are the most convinced of it) are always the most Humble.

## S E C T. VII.

*Second Reason why the greatest Saints are the most humble.*

I Have said enough of Saints, who have preserv'd their Innocence. The Second Reason only has regard to Saints, who

who by their Crimes have lost it heretofore; and now are truly Penitent. If They who Know themselves the best, are therefore the most Humble, because they Doubt the most of their Perseverance. Surely Those who Know most clearly the Enormity of Sin, which they are guilty of, have much more Reason to be Humble; because they Doubt much more of their obtaining Pardon.

There is a great difference says St. Jerome, between a Man whose Vessel is entire, and richly laden, when he sails into the Port of Bliss; and Him who, after Shipwrack, after Swimming for his life, rides naked on a Plank; and after being dashed, a hundred times against the Rocks, at length is cast upon the Sands, half dead, and almost bruised to pieces. If a Man, who sails in a sound Vessel, never is secure from Storms which may arise, but always doubts of his arrival at the Port: we may be sure his Case is much more doubtful, and more terrible, who has already suffered Shipwrack; and has nothing left him, but a single Plank, to bear him up.

Epist. ad  
Salv.

'Tis true : it happens now and then  
 (and 'tis a comfortable Ob-  
*Abbe Fe-* servation of a Holy Man,  
*an. Entre-* whose Name is famous in  
*tien. 7.* our present Age) 'it hap-  
 'pens now and then, that  
 'He, *to whom the winds and sea obey,*  
 'Matth. 8. 27. is pleased to make them  
 'for a time so calm and quiet, that a  
 'Man who swims upon his plank with  
 'industry and courage, meets at length  
 'by Providence, another Vessel, better  
 'than his own; and sails with much  
 'more Comfort, much more Joy, into  
 'the Haven, than he would have done  
 'if he had never suffered Shipwrack in  
 'Storm. S. John Climacus, in his 15.  
 'Degree, inquires *which of the two is*  
 'Greater in the sight of God; *he who died*  
 '*by sin, and rose again to life by Grace?*  
 '*Or he who never died the spiritual death*  
 '*of Sin?* And answers, that *whoever*  
 '*Thinks the Innocent more happy of the*  
 '*two, is much mistaken.* The Reason  
 'is: because all Sanctity is founded in  
 'Humility and Charity. Whoever Loves  
 'God best, and is most Humble, is the  
 'Greatest Saint. It happens oftentimes  
 'that *He to whom a little is forgiven,*  
 '*Loves but little:* Luc. 7. 47. and it hap-  
 'pens

pens now and then, that He Loves  
 best, who is most mercifully pardon'd,  
 and forgiven most. v. 43. We read in  
 Scripture several examples of this na-  
 ture. *Zachary* as soon as he had done  
 sufficient Pennance for his incredulity,  
 immediately had his Speech restor'd  
 him; and not only that, but he was  
 also honour'd with the Gift of Pro-  
 phecy; which we do not read he  
 had before. The *Prodigal* receiv'd  
 much greater favours and caresses from  
 his Father, than he ever had experi-  
 enc't before he left him. *Lazarus*  
 himself, (who was the *Figure* of great  
 Sinners) never had the honour to be  
 entertain'd, at Table, with the Son  
 of God; before he was, by miracle,  
 rais'd from the Grave. *S. Peter* had  
 not confidence, before he sinn'd, to  
 ask our Saviour, Who he was that  
 would betray him? But, when he  
 had wash'd away his sins with Tears,  
 he was permitted to be more familiar  
 with his Master, and was made the  
 Sovereign Pastor of his Church. From  
 whence 'tis easie to conclude, that  
 Sinners may sometimes, by Pennance,  
 grow more Perfect than those Saints  
 who having kept their Innocence, Love  
 God

God less fervently, and serve him  
with more coldness and indifference.  
Behold, says Saint Ambrose, the great  
Goodness of our God! How liberal and  
generous He is, to whom he pleases to be  
merciful! He's not contented to restore  
what they have lost. He grants them o-  
ver and above, such Graces, and such  
Favours, as they never durst have hop'd  
for. Thus, as the Apostle says, Rom.  
§. 20. where Sin abounded, Grace a-  
bounds much more: because the more  
Sin humbles them, the more they are  
Exalted. When a Penitent, whom  
Sin had blinded, once begins to See,  
and to discover clearly the Enormity  
of his offences, he has much more rea-  
son to be humble all his life, than if  
he had been always innocent. He looks  
upon himself no better than a Crimi-  
nal repriev'd, who is upon his good  
behaviour of his pardon; and per-  
swades himself that he can never give  
sufficient proof of his Fidelity, and  
the Sincerity of his Repentance. All  
his Exercises of continual Penitence  
never make him Vain; but only serve  
to humble him the more: because he  
looks upon them, only as the Remedies  
of his Diseases; and such Remedies



as he must use till Death; which is the only End, he hopes to see, of his Distempers. The Employment of his Thoughts is the Consideration of his grievous Sins, which he perpetually laments; where e'er he goes, he never leaves the doleful Memory behind him, *Micb. 6. 15. His humiliation is always in the midst of him.* Since therefore he who hates the Proud, gives Graces to the Humble; 1 Pet. 5. 5. is't not lawful to infer, that Sinners may sometimes arrive to a more eminent Degree of Sanctity, than many of those Saints, who never fell quite down, but yet walk slowly in the way to Heaven?

This happens, *now and then*, 'tis true; but such examples are as rare, as they are great. They are effects of more than ordinary Grace, which God grants only *when and where* he pleases. S. Peter never would have wept so bitterly, if Jesus had not mercifully turn'd and look'd upon him. *Luke. 22. 61, 62.* Lazarus had never risen from the grave, if Jesus had not come himself, and call'd him forth with a loud voice. *Jo. 11. 43.* The Prodigal had never come back to his Father, if he had not first come to himself,

*Self*, Luke 15. 17. Alas, poor Wretch! he follow'd *Swine* before; and if he might have filled his belly with their *huck*, v. 16. he would have been contented. See the blindness of a Sinner! But as soon as ever he came to himself, v. 17. his eyes were open; and the opening of his eyes was that which brought him to himself. He saw the great Enormity of his offences; v. 18. *I have sinn'd*, says he, *I have sinn'd against Heaven*; v. 19. *and before my Father's face*; *I am not worthy to be call'd his Son*. The Idea of his Sins was now so terrible, and made so deep impression in him; that it humbled him, not only in his Judgment, but his Heart. It humbled him so much, that he not only thought himself unworthy, but desired to be receiv'd accordingly; and begg'd his Father not to entertain him as a Son, but as one of his hired servants, v. 19.

When once the Grace of God enlightens us, and by a Miracle of Mercy breaks through the impenetrable Darkness which our Passions cloud our Reason with; this Light discovers clearly to us the Enormity of Sin; and as this Light encreases, we discover daily more and more. This Light is followed with

A Sacred *Heat* that softens the obdurate coldness of our Temper, by which means, the terrible Idea of our Guilt makes, every day, a deeper and more sensible *Impression* in our Hearts. And This is the Second Reason, why the Greatest Saints are the most humble: because, the greater Saints they are, the more They see the great Enormity of Sin; the more They feel the Terroure of their Guilt; the more They doubt of their obtaining Pardon; and the more They fear and tremble all their life.

**L**

*The Enormity of Sin.*

**T**H E humble Penitent, whose words I lately cited, thus describes his coming to himself.

*Entre-*

Whilst I pursued, says he, *rien. 7.*

the wandering Errours of my

Heart, I drunk Iniquity like water;

Job 15. 16. and not only that, but was

so hardened, and so blind, that what-

soever I read, or heard, of Sin, made

no impression; and instead of work-

ing my Conversion, only serv'd to

render me more Guilty, and more in-

excusable. At length, the happy

Time arriv'd, in which it pleas'd the

Father of all Mercies, 1 Cor. 1. 3. and the God of all our Comfort, to bestow a favourable look upon me: and the first Glance presently disperst the Darkness of my Soul, The very Dawning of that Light discover'd to me the Infernal Monster, in whose company, I had so long liv'd unconcern'd. I saw, and was immediately seiz'd with so prodigious Fear and Trembling at the Sight, that I am confident, as long as I have breath to live, I never shall recover it.

S. Isidore of Damiette de-  
Ibid. scribes this Monster in surprising terms: Some think, says he, that the Devil was the Father of Sin; and Others on the contrary maintain, that Sin was the Father of the Devil. Be it how you please, says he, I leave you to imagine, either what a Father it must be of such a Son; or what a Son we may expect of such a Father. This, I must confess, is Black enough. But all it's Blackness only serves to leave us in the Dark. We are not yet, one jot the nearer Knowing, what sins is. And all that we can gather from it, is that we are never like to have it painted to the Life, unless an Angel undertake to draw it, and the Devil sit for the Picture. The

The Philosopher was in the right of it, when being askt the question, *what God is?* he took a Day; then two; then three; and after all, ingeniously confess'd, the more he thought of it, the more he found himself unable to express it. If a man should ask me the like question: *what a Sinner is?* I should not be ashamed to own, I am not able to describe the one, no more than he was to express the other.

If God be the Supreme and Sovereign Good, if *with Him* all things else are good, if nothing else be good *without Him*; We may, in proportion, say the same of Sin. 'Tis the Supreme and Sovereign Evil. All things else are evil *with it*, Nothing else is *so* to us *without it*.

If it be true, that All good comes from God, as from the First and Universal Cause of All; The same is true of Sin, which is the First and Universal Root of all our Evils. God made Heaven: Sin made Hell. He made the Earth: Sin made it miserable. He created Angels in his Paradise *above*: Sin threw them *down*. He created Man and Woman in our Paradise *below*: and Sin immediately cast them *out*.

Consider all the Torments of the Damn'd, the cruel Pains of those Eternal Flames, the never ceasing Anguishes of their despairing Rage, &c. All This, and More than All that you are able to conceive, is only Part of the Effects of Sin. *But* *Must* *sin* *be* *prepaid*. All this, and More than this, for Them and Us.

If what you only know by Faith make no impression: if you are more sensible of what we suffer *here*, than what they suffer *there*: Consider the Revolt of all the Elements against us. Fire which once was only made to serve us, now becomes the fatal instrument our angry God makes use of to destroy and punish us: The very Air we breath, infects us with Diseases: and the Earth, we walk on, trembles, opens, buries us alive. All This had never been, if Man had never Sinned.

Consider all the Miseries, which Famine, Plague, and War involve us in: the Poverty of half the World: with all the Hunger, Thirst, Cold, Sickness, and Despair, which Follow it: And after all, the Civil War of Passion against Reason; which, if well examined, will be found the Greatest and most Painful of our Miseries; from whence proceed our Ignorance and Malice

and

and from thence all Immoralities, Corruptions, and Scandals, which we meet with in the World: All This had never been; if Man had never Sinn'd.

Consider all the sad Disasters, You or Yours have met with; all the Losses you have suffer'd, in your Family, Estate, or Friends; and all the Crosses you have born with so much Pain: Whatever you have undergone, you never had been subject to, your Heart had never ask'd; if Man had never Sinn'd. Accursed Sin! the only first Beginning, and first Cause of all our Mischiefs, both in this World and the next.

My God! if once we Saw Thee as Thou art, 1 Jo. 3. 2. we could not possibly be Tepid and indifferent; the very Sight of so much Goodness would, in spite of all our Passions, force us to Admire, Adore, and Love Thee above all the World. Accursed Sin! if once we could but See Thee as Thou art; the very Sight of so much Malice would not suffer us to Love Thee any longer; it would be impossible for either World, or Flesh, or Devil to prevail against us; we should Hate Thee above all things; we should then abhor, detest, abominate Thee evermore. Accursed Sinner!

such Goodness; and Thou not Love in  
such Malice: and Thou not Hate it.

If the Eternal Source of all our Good  
be infinite in Goodness: what's the First  
and Everlasting Root of all our Evils?  
Is it not infinite in Malice? Question-  
less it is. Besides; God is not only in-  
finite in Goodness; He is infinite in  
Wisdom, infinite in Justice, infinite in  
all Perfections whatsoever. So is Sin.  
It is not only infinite in Malice, it is also  
infinite in Folly, infinite in all the No-  
tions we can frame of it. The Treas-  
ery, Disloyalty, Impiety, Ingratitude,  
Presumption, Pride, and Insolence.  
All This and More than all that we can  
think of, All is infinite.

According to the Principle which I  
have here laid down, if any man should  
ask me, *what a Sinner is?* I should not  
know what other Name to Give him:  
**SINNER** is his only Name: and I  
can think of nothing like Him, but the  
Man related in S. Mark. Ch. 5. 2. He is  
possess't with an Unclean Spirit: pos-  
sess't with the Devil; and which is  
worse; possess't with Sin, the Father of  
the Devil. He is so unruly in his Passions,  
Inclinations, and Humours; that No  
Man can bind Him; v. 3. No, not with

Chains.



*Chains.* The Laws of God are his Fetters; but these He breaks in pieces; neither is it possible for any man to tame Him. If you ask his Name; the Gospel says 'tis Legion, v. 9. because He is Many. Sin, and Sinner, are two Names, like that of Legion: Every Mortal Sin, is Many Sins; and every Sinner, is as Many Sinners. 'Tis impossible to number all the Aggravations of a Mortal Sin: They are as numberless as the Perfections of our offended God: and therefore I shall only mention those which are the most Notorious, the most Obvious to common Sense, and such as are most Odious betwixt Man and Man.

A Sinner, Every sinner, is in every mortal Sin, not only guilty of one Crime, but of a Legion of Crimes: an Ungrateful Villain, who Betrays his Benefactor; a Presumptuous Slave, who Abuses his Deliverer: a Proud Servant, who Despises his Master! an Insolent Criminal, who Offends before his Judge's face. All these are Crimes we have a Flourish of, when we observe them only betwixt Fellow-creatures, betwixt Man and Man. All these are infinitely Greater betwixt Man and God. And e-

very Mortal Sin includes the utmost Aggravations of them All.

## II.

The great Ingratitude, Presumption, Pride, & Insolence, &c.

**A**N ungrateful Villain. An Upstart, rais'd from less than Dust. An empty Thing, extracted out of Nothing. That such a Thing as this, and so exalted as it is, should be so stupid; so insensible of all his Obligations, so unmindful of the Favours he receives, and so ill-natur'd to his greatest Benefactor; who continually makes him all he is; who dayly gives him all he has; to whom he owes, the bread he eats, the air he breaths, the ground he goes upon, the hand he moves, the very life he spends in Sin, and all the Time allow'd him to repent! Can such a Creature; so oblig'd; by such a Benefactor; be so basely and so horribly ungrateful, to betray Him; and prefer before Him the unreasonable satisfaction, of a silly Humour? of a shameful Passion? of a sinful Inclination? Open (once for all) thy Eyes, Blind Sin-

Sinner; and confess, that no ingratitude, but that of Judas, can compare to thine.

A Slave, (I wish he were so, to his Master) A Slave to Passion and Humour; A Slave to Sin and Misery; A Slave condemn'd to worse than Gallies, during Life, and afterwards to the Eternal Flames of Hell, where *neither Eye has seen, Nor Ear has heard, nor has it ever entred into the heart of any Man,* 1 Cor. 2. 9. what Torments God's great Justice has prepar'd for those who dare abuse his Mercy. A vile Slave, deliver'd from the mischief of all This; by God himself; descending from his Glory; living here a poor and painful life; and laying down the same, with every drop of his most precious blood, to pay the ransom of this Wretch: That such a Slave; deliver'd so; by such a hand, should offer to abuse the Mercy which once sav'd him, and still holds him by a slender thred, from falling into everlasting Misery!

A Servant, I should have said, a miserable Insect, full of sinful putrefaction, a vile Spawn of Man's original Corruption, a Worm, whose very Crawling on its fellow-dust is more  
Prefer-

Preferment than it can deserve. That such a Thing as This, should be so proud as to despise the Master of the World! So Great, so Wise, so Infinitely Perfect, and so every way Deserving as He is! This Vemyn has indeed a Soul; an Angel once, by Grace; but now, by Sin, a Devil black as Hell in self; a Lucifer that will be *burning Good and Evil*, Gen. 3. 5. will be *like the Highest*, Isa. 14. 14. will pretend to Govern in his Master's House, *despise his Orders*, *slight his Menaces*, *neglect his Admonitions*. *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this*, Jer. 2. 12.

A most insolent Criminal; A Criminal so insolent, as to offend before God's Face; in presence of his General, his King, his Father, his Deliverer, his Benefactor, and his Master; and besides all this, in presence of his Judge; before the very Bar, where he continually is upon his Tryal for his everlasting Life or Death. Our Saviour says, Joh. 3. 18. *that whosoever believeth not, is condemn'd already*. We may say the same of every Sinner: In the very moment he offends, *He is condemn'd already*. His All-Seeing Judge is always

Witness

Witness of his Thoughts, Words, Actions and Desires: and He no sooner is a Criminal, but he is Try'd and Judg'd.

This Insolence of his, in some respect, exceeds all other Aggravations of his Crime. 'Tis an Extravagance of which we hardly find the least Example betwixt Man and Man. We often hear of Souldiers that Desert: But whensoever they go, they steal away: We never hear that they acquaint their General with such Designs. We often hear of Subjects that conspire against the Government: but never hear them talk such matters loudly, in the hearing of their Prince. We often hear of Murders, Robberies, and many other Outrages, committed in the World: But when the Prisoner once was brought to Tyral, did you ever hear, He either Robb'd, or Murder'd, at the Bar? No, no, such Insolence was never heard of, betwixt Man and Man. And yet this very Insolence is infinitely less than Ours, which we are always guilty of, in every Mortal Sin.

I say no more. I tremble at the very thought of having said so much; when I reflect, how All that we can either

either say or think, will ne'er convert us without Grace. There's nothing but the Grace of God can make a deep Impression of it in our Hearts.

## III.

*Our Saviour's Idea of Sin: and the Impression it made upon him.*

**O**UR Saviour Jesus Christ best knew the great *Enormity* of Sin; and we may judge how great it is, by the *Impression* which it made upon Him; when the approaching Hour of his Passion laid before his Eyes the terrible *Idea* of it.

'Twas the first Bloody Scene of all his Sufferings. He began to be *Sorrowful and very heavy*; Matth. 26. 37. A Deluge of Grief broke in upon his Soul, quite overwhelm'd his Heart; and lay so heavy upon his fearful Thoughts, He was not able to conceal it any longer, and support the pressing weight of his Affliction, all alone, in silence. His three most Dear and most Familiar Disciples, were surpris'd so much, to see this sudden alteration in their dearest Lord; They were not able to enquire the Cause, but like Job's

three

three Friends they stood astonish'd, and spoke nor one word to Him, because they saw his Grief was very Great, Job

2. 13.

Our Saviour could hold no longer, but broke out into this doleful expression, *Matth. 26. 38. My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death.* Ah my dear Disciples! if you knew, as well as I do, all the Motives of my Grief, you would not wonder that the very Thought of them makes me look pale, and shews you the face of Death in my countenance.

The violent pangs of my afflicted Soul are so sharp and piercing, that, did not my Divinity support me, and preserve my life, I should immediately, this very moment, dye upon the place. *Matth. 26. 38. Stay a while, and watch with me.* You, who love me best, who have been always most familiar with me, Be not now so unkind as to leave me in this sad condition all alone: *Stay a while, and watch with me,* till my storm of Grief blow over.

Dear Christians, Let us stay a while, and with these three Disciples, not only admire but search into the cause of this great alteration in the Soul of our Redeemer. How was it possible that not

He

He should begin to fear so much that Death, which all his Life he had so much desir'd? His Love for Man, and his Desire of dying for us, were conceiv'd by the operation of the Holy Ghost, they came into the World with him, and ever after so employ'd his Thoughts, He scarce could talk of any thing else. Amongst his Disciples, his common Discourse was of his Sufferings, the Cup he was to drink, his Obligation, his Readiness, his Impatience, to fulfill the Prophecies, Luke 12. 50. *I have, says he, a Baptism to be baptis'd with, and how am I straitned, 'till it be accomplish'd?* When the time drew nearer, He redoubled his desires of dying for us, Luke 22. 25. *with Desire I have desir'd to eat this Passeeover with you.* And why? (says St. Chrysostom,) Because it is a preparation to my Passion, which I have so long, so earnestly desir'd. He knew, from the beginning, every Torment, every degree of it: Often reflected on each Circumstance apart; and as often took delight in viewing all of them together. Upon Mount Thabor, when the Glory of his Blessed Soul shin'd through his Body, like the Sun through a transparent Cloud,



Cloud, upon the dazzled Eyes of his Disciples; giving them a glymple of the Eternal Glory we expect hereafter. Our Saviour seem'd to be as much delighted with the prospect of his Passion, as with all the joys of Heaven: and as upon another occasion, when his Disciples pray'd him to eat? *Job. 4. 31. 34.* He told them, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and finish his work;* so when they desir'd Him to stay and make Tabernacles, *Luke 9. 30. 33.* it was his joy and delight to talk with Moses and Elias of his Decease, his Passion which he should accomplish, at Hierusalem, ver. 31.

Ah Christians! you have reason to admire, and wonder that the God of all your comfort, *2 Cor. 1. 3.* is now heavy and disconsolate: But you will fear and tremble, more than wonder, if you seriously reflect that all his Grief proceeded chiefly from the terrible Idea which He had of Sin; not his but ours. St. Hierom says, His greatest Grief proceeded *Apud D.* not from fear of suffering, *Tho. in Cat.* because He came to suffer; But He chiefly griev'd for Judas, for the

Scam

*Schism of the Apostles, and the Repro-  
bation of the People, &c.*

This agrees exactly with our Savi-  
our's words, *Luke 23. 27. 8.* to those  
who follow'd Him to Calvary; when  
turning to the women who lamented Him,  
He said, *Daughters of Hierusalem, weep  
not for me only, weep also for your selves,  
and for your Children. Weep not for  
me; My torments will be short: weep  
for your selves; your torments (if you  
do not weep, repent, and mend)  
will be Eternal. Alas! the Torments  
which I willingly and freely suffer for  
your sake, are Nothing to the Pains of  
Hell, which you for ever will endure,  
unless by penitential tears, mixt with  
my blood, You wash away your Sins.*  
*ver. 31. If they do this, in the green  
wood, what will they do, in the Dry? If  
I, though Innocent, suffer thus for your  
Sins; You, who are Guilty, what are  
you like to suffer for your own? If I,  
who am true God, the only beloved  
Son of my Eternal Father, who never  
once offended Him; if, because I in-  
terpose betwixt you and his Justice, I  
am thus severely treated; what will be-  
come of miserable Creatures, grievous  
Sinners, who so often have offended  
Him,*

Him, if they do not joyn their tears with mine; if they are not afflicted with me for their Sins, for which I die upon the Cross? Every Soul who upon this day is not afflicted, shall perish. Levit. 23. 29. Every Soul who thinks upon this Day, and is not afflicted with his dying Saviour, is not heartily afflicted for those Sins, for which he dies, shall certainly perish.

Neither does it contradict, what commonly is said, that One great Difference betwixt our Saviour and his Martyrs, was, that by a Miracle of Grace He gave them that undaunted Courage, which by a greater Miracle He now refus'd to himself. 'Tis true; He freely suffer'd in himself the Natural Fear of Death; to shew himself True Man as well as God; to let us see as once the Weakness of our Nature, and the Power of Grace; and comfort us, by making it appear that such Infirmities of Nature are not Sins, as long as Reason governs them, and Resignation submits to the will of God. But yet there is another greater Difference betwixt his Case and theirs. Martyrs, who die for God's sake, are secure of their success; they are sure

luck

not

not to suffer in vain, they are certain to possess all that they desire, and to enjoy eternally their God to whom they Sacrifice their Lives. This is the Reason why our Martyrs look Death boldly in the face; with open arms receive it; and go to meet it with the same assurance, as if they went to Heaven. Let the Body suffer all the worst of Pains, the Soul is unconcern'd, the Soul is secure *Anima de Deo suo* of God, the Soul is in Heaven before hand. When *semper secunda.* Man dies to enjoy God; Cypr. he is sure he shall enjoy him. But (alas!) it is not so when Jesus dies for Man. He dies to gain his Love; and at the same time knows that he will prove ungrateful. He dies to enjoy him in Heaven; and foresees he will be damn'd for all Eternity. The Lively apprehension of his torments all together, was enough to make him *Sorrowful, even to Death;* but however, if he could have promis'd himself the Eternal Salvation of all those dear-bought Souls for which He died, the joyful assurance of so happy a success, would have eas'd the burthen of his Grief; his torments, all of them, would

would have been welcome upon that condition. But to sweat blood in vain, to be scourg'd to no purpose; to spend the last drop of his Sacred veins to no effect; was an Affliction not to be supported, without praying his Eternal Father to have pity and compassion on him: *Father, if it be possible, Matth. 26. 39. dispense at least with this part of my Sentence, Let me die; But do not let me die in vain.*

'Tis said of Joseph in the Book of Genesis, Ch. 45. 15. *He kiss'd all his Brethren, and wept over every one of them.* I may say the same of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: He griev'd for All his Brethren, and wept over every one of them in particular. He saw before his eyes the Sins of every person in the World; the Graces which he would from time to time bestow upon us, the neglect of all his Offers, and abuse of all his Favours. He foresaw every Temptation which we yield to; and griev'd to see it. He foresaw each profanation of the Sacraments, which we frequent unworthily, and fainted with grief, when he thought how often his most precious Blood would by our fault become the Poison of our Souls. He

show

fore-

foreſaw in the whole courſe of our Lives, where, when, and how, we would reſiſt, and render ineffectual, all the Directions, Admonitions and Exhortations of his Miniſters; and fell into a bloody Sweat at the very thought of our Ingratitude, by which the chief means of attaining Everlaſting Happineſs ſerve only, in the end, to juſtify our Sentence of Eternal Miſery. *Iſaiab* 35. 4. 6. He bore our Griefs; He carried our Sorrows; He took upon him the Iniquities of us All; and every one our moſt grievous Sins appear'd to him in a more hideous ſhape, than ever it appear'd to any Creature.

Mortal Sin is as Bad as God is Good. It ſeparates us from our God, and leaves our Souls as Empty as our God is Great. So that as God is infinitely Good, the Malice of a Mortal Sin is infinitely Evil. As none of us can underſtand the infinite Goodneſs of the one, ſo none of us are able to conceive the infinite Malice of the other. Chriſt himſelf, as God, could comprehend them Both: as Man, He comprehended neither. But yet the clear and full Idea He had of it was proportion'd to his Beaſtly Viſion of God's Eſſence, and by conſequence the

perfectest that ever was. His clearest Sight, and ardent Love of God, were in a manner infinite: So were his Knowledge and his Hatred of all Mortal Sin. And the Impression this Idea made upon him, was the chief, if not the only, Reason why our Saviour could not hold from telling his Disciples; *Matth. 16. 38. My Soul is exceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death.* His Soul was overwhelmed with such a Deluge of Affliction, that his Grief, not being able to contain itself within the Bounds of Nature, violently forc'd it self through all his pores, in Tears of Blood.

Ah my dear Jesus! when shall I be able to make such a perfect Act of true Contrition for my Sins, as Thou hast made for mine! When shall I be able to say, *My Soul is exceeding Sorrowful even unto Death!* When shall I lament my grievous Sins in Tears of Blood? *Jeremi. 9. 1. Give me, at least, water to my Head, and Fountains to my Eyes.* No Contrite Heart, but Thine, bleeds otherwise than at the Eyes: and 'tis (I hope) enough for me, if I can be so sorry for my Sins, as to lament them all the days I have to live, and rather Die than ever Sin again.

The

## IV.

*The Saints Idea of Sin. How much it humbles Them.*

**T**Here's Nothing but the Grace of Jesus Christ can make us Saints. There's nothing else can make us clearly see and heartily detest the Malice of our Sins. The greater share we have of this great Grace, the more we see it and detest it; so much more we fear and tremble at the very thought of it; and as our Grace encreases, we grow every day more humble by remembering it.

To make this out, I need not write the lives of all the Saints. A Pattern is

enough to judge of all the Piece;  
*Deg.* especially such a one as S. John Climacus, an ancient Father of the Church, has left behind him.

*Ar. 20.* He assures us, his Relation is no Fable: He affirms that what

*Art. 2.* he says, He saw with his own eyes; and that He was

*Ar. 27.* whole month in their Company.

Draw near, says he, all You who have provok'd the wrath of God by your Offences: Come, and Hear the

Won-



Wonders He was pleas'd to let me See,  
for my Edification: Be attentive to my  
words, all You who have a mind to  
reconcile your selves to God, by a sin-  
cere Conversion.

When I was, says he, in the Mo-  
nastery of Penitents; I saw Men so ex-  
treamly humbled with the grievous  
weight of their Offences, that their  
cries and prayers to God, would even  
move the stones themselves. With  
heads bow'd down, and eyes upon the  
ground, I heard them say: *we confess,*  
*O Lord, we confess that we deserve to*  
*suffer all chastisements and afflictions;*  
*because our Sins are such, that should*  
*we Summon all the Universe to weep for*  
*us, the Tears of all the world would ne-*  
*ver make sufficient Satisfaction.* There  
remains one only thing we ask, one only  
thing we pray for; *Ps. 6. 1. That Thou*  
*never mayst correct us in thy Anger,*  
*nor chastise us in thy great displeasure;*  
*but a little spare us, through thy infinite*  
*Mercy.* 'Tis enough, *O Lord, that Thou*  
*deliver us from those inexplicable Tor-*  
*ments hidden in the Center of the Earth.*  
*We dare not ask a full and perfect Par-*  
*don: we, who have not kept the holy*  
*Laws of our Profession; but have bro-*

ken them again, when Thou hadst given us the most endearing Marks of Love and Mercy, in forgiving of our Sins.

Who ever saw them Laugh? Who ever heard amongst them any idle Talk? Who ever could observe that any Passion transported them? Or any Anger mov'd them? Alas! they hardly knew what Anger was: their great affliction and continual Grief had now extinguish't in them all Emotions of Resentment. There was never known the least appearance of Dispute: the least lashing out in Discourse: the least Sign of Vainglory. There was no Jollity of Feasting: no Concern for the body: no Love of ease and pleasure: no Thought of Wine: no Use of Fruits: no Care for delicacies pleasing to the palate. The Desire of all such things was quite extinct. And after all, there was not to be found the least Censoriousness, or least appearance of an Inclination to Judge their Neighbours.

Some of them, now and then, would knock their breasts; and, as if they were already at the Gate of Heaven, *Open us*, said they, *O Judge of Mankind, Open us the Gate of Happiness,* which

which we have shut by Sin. Others would say, Luke 11. 79. Give light to us, O Lord, who sit in Darknes, in the Shades of Death; and guide our steps into the way of Peace. Others again; will the Almighty look upon us any more? Is't possible to pay our Debts, and satisfy for our Offences? will our God, once more afford us any Comfort? we are laid in chains of Sin; And shall we one day, bear him say, Come forth?

They always had their Hour of Death before their eyes; and sometimes they would say to one another; what will then become of us? what Sentence will our God pronounce upon us? what will be our End? shall we be then call'd home from Banishment, to which we have been hitherto condemn'd for our Offences? Shall such Criminals, as we, find any favour then? Such Sinners as we are? Such miserable wretches, cover'd with Confusion and Darknes? Have our Prayers mount'd to the Throne of God? Or have they been rejected, as they well deserve? If well received, how far have they prevail'd? Have they obtain'd a full Discharge, or only Part? Alas! they could not have much force, proceeding from such mouths, so sinful, so impure, as Ours.

At other times, They thus discount  
 their fears and doubts : what think  
 you Brethren ? Do you think that we  
 advance ? Do you think that we obtain  
 the effect of our Demands ? Do you think  
 that God will once again receive us ?  
 Do you think He'll open us the Gates of  
 Heaven ? Who can tell, (said the Nini-  
 vites ;) who knows, but God may change  
 the Sentence which He has pronounc'd a-  
 gainst us ? Though perhaps He will not  
 free us from the rigorous Chastisements  
 which we have deserv'd : However, Let  
 us labour all we can, and Do whatever  
 we are able. If He open us the Gate of  
 Heaven we are Happy : if He does not,  
 He is Just : and therefore never let us  
 cease to bless Him. Doubtful, as we are,  
 what may be our Destiny, we must con-  
 tinue all our Life, still knocking at the  
 Door. Perhaps our Importunity, our  
 Constancy, and our Perseverance may  
 find Admittance, in the End.

Behold the Language of the Saints !  
 Consider how their Fear and Trembling  
 humbles them, in Presence of their an-  
 gry God. Consider the Idea which They  
 have of Sin : how different it is from  
 what we generally have. Consider the  
 Impression which it makes upon them,

and compare it with our Stupidness, our Hardness, our Insensibility. Conclude with shame and sorrow, that this difference twixt them and us proceeds not from their having been much greater Sinners than we are; but from our being much less Saints than They.

When any of these Penitents drew nigh the hour of Death; how Terrible, how Lamentable was the Spectacle! These Blessed Criminals, when any one of their Companions was upon the point of leaving them; They All surrounded him, with aking hearts, and weeping eyes, to ask him; *How do you find your self, Dear Brother; Dear Companion in our Miseries and Sufferings? what say you, Now? what do you hope? what do you think? Have you obtain'd what you have labour'd for, with so much pain? Or is your Labour lost? Are you arriv'd at the Port? Or are you not? Have you a full Assurance of your Happiness? Or have you only an uncertain Hope? Do you find your self in perfect Liberty of Mind? Or are you yet in Trouble and Anxiety? Have you heard already, in the Secret of your Soul, a voice, which tells you; Mat. 9. 2. Your sins are forgiven you? Or do you seem*

to hear that formidable Sentence; Psal.  
9. 17. The wicked shall be turn'd in  
to Hell? what say you, Brother? Tell  
us, we conjure you, Tell us Now sincerely;  
that by knowing what Condition you are  
in at present, we may guess, what State  
we may be in, one Day, our selves.

To these Demands, some of these  
dying Penitents made answer: Psal.  
66. 20. Blessed be God who has not turn'd  
away my Prayer, nor his Mercy from me.  
Others, in a doleful tone reply'd: Ps.  
124. 4. Can our Soul go over the Stream of  
waters, which are like to overwhelm us?  
This they said, not being yet assur'd of  
their Salvation; but considering with  
fear and trembling what might happen  
to them in the terrible Accompt which  
now was nigh at Hand. And others an-  
swer'd more uncomfortably: wo be to  
the Soul that has not kept inviolably all the  
Laws of it's Profession. See; the Hour is  
come; the only Hour in which we shall be-  
gin to know our State for all Eternity.

These Blessed Penitents, for one Re-  
lapse, did Penance, the severest they  
were able to invent: And we, for  
numberless Relapses, many of them  
worse than theirs, Do none at all.  
These Penitents Persever'd in the same

Austerities 'till Death, their *Penance* had no End : We still Persevere in our Sins, our *Penance* never begins. Their *Fear and Trembling*, their profound *Humility*, went hand in hand with all their *Penance* and *Perseverance* : Our *Confidence* and *Unconcern'dness*, our extravagant *Presumption*, always keep an equal pace with our *Tepidity* and *Slothfulness*. Dear Christians, give me leave to ask, Why all this *difference* 'twixt them and us ? A thousand years, betwixt their Age, and this which now we live in, have they alter'd the *Almighty* ? Has He less *Authority* to punish us ? Or we less *Obligation* to Obey Him, Honour Him, and make Him *Satisfaction*, if we do not ? Is our God less *Just*, because we more abuse his *Mercy* ? Or more *Merciful*, because we less regard his *Justice* ? Alas ! Our *Blindness* is the only Reason : We are blinder than they were : And therefore we are more *secure*, more *unconcern'd*, more *proud*, more *tepid*, and more *slothful*.

Jesu, Son of David, have Mercy on me, *Luke 18. 38.* Thou Blessed Saviour of the World, who enlightnest every Man that comes into it, *John 1. 9.* O

open away my eyes; and keep them  
 open, that I may continually see  
 and Love thy Goodness, Wisdom, Mer-  
 cy, Justice; and by the assistance of so  
 great a Grace, perpetually see and  
 Hate the Malice of my Sins. There's  
 nothing but thy Grace that can enlighten  
 every Man that comes into the World.  
 There's nothing else can Clear my Un-  
 derstanding, and Refresh my Heart.  
 There's nothing else can make me truly  
 Contrite, truly Humble. *Jesu Son of*  
*David, have Mercy on me, a Sinner,*  
*Luke 18. 38. who am not in the way,*  
*nor going on, but sitting by the way*  
*side, ver. 35. begging thy Assistance.*  
 Here I sit, and wait thy passing by.  
 My Blindness hinders me from doing a-  
 ny more: And even when I Hear Thee  
 pass, ver. 36, I know not how to fol-  
 low Thee. The Croud of all my Pas-  
 sions, Inclinations and Humours, and  
 the Multitude of my Engagements, Cares  
 and Troubles, make a noise about me;  
 such a one (I fear) as will not let Thee  
 hear me. When I offer to cry out for  
 help, they try to stop my mouth, and  
 bid me hold my peace, v. 39. and there-  
 fore I cry out so much the more, *Jesu,*  
*thou Son of David, have Mercy on me,*  
v. 39.



v. 39. Thou need'st not stand to ask me what I want, or what I will that Thou should'st Do unto me, v. 41. Thou, who know'st my Wants so infinitely better than my self. The only Favour which I humbly beg, is that I may receive my Sight, v. 41. Say only, to my Soul, as once Thou said'st to that Blind Man, who was a Figure of me; Say, Receive thy Sight; Thy Faith has sav'd Thee, v. 42. Say but this, (Thy words are powerful, and make themselves prove true) Say only This; and then immediately I shall receive my Sight, and follow Thee, v. 43. I then shall follow thy Example. I shall follow thy Disciples, and thy Saints. I then shall do fit Pennance for my Sins: and shall Persevere in it to the End. I then shall study how to punish every Passion, Inclination and Humour which induc'd me to Offend Thee. I shall then be truly Contrite, truly Humble; I shall Glorify Thee all my life, v. 45. and all the People, when They See the Happy Change, shall give the Praise to God. Amen.

THE  
CHARACTER  
OF A  
Good Christian

*The Perfection of his Duty.*

**W** Hoever seriously professes the Religion of Christ, and takes the Gospel for the Rule of that Divine Religion, making it his Business to acquire that Sanctity which Jesus Christ demands of his Disciples, is a Christian. The Gospel was not only

' writ for those we call *Religious*. We  
 ' are, all of *us Religious Persons*;  
 ' of the *Best and First* of all *Reli-*  
 ' *gions*, which is that of *Jesus Christ*.  
 ' We have a *Rule*, a *Habit*, and a *Found-*  
 ' *der*: We have *Vows* and *Exercises*.  
 ' *Christ* first instituted and establish'd our  
 ' *Religion*: He's the *Founder* of our *Or-*  
 ' *der*. *Innocence* and *Sanctity* make up  
 ' the *Habit*, we receive in *Baptism*.  
 ' Our *Promises* of abrenouncing all the  
 ' *Pomps* and *Works* of *Satan*, are our  
 ' *Vows*. The *Gospel* is our *Rule*, Our  
 ' *Prayers*, *Pennances*, and generally all  
 ' good *Actions*, are our *Exercises*.

' *Do you think the Gospel*  
 ' *was not written*, says *St.* *Ibid.*  
 ' *Basil*, every jot as much  
 ' for *Married Persons*, as for *Monks*?  
 ' Undoubtedly 'tis by this *Rule*, that *Both*  
 ' are to be *Judg'd*. 'Tis well, if married  
 ' people can obtain *God's pardon* for the  
 ' faults committed in that *State*. In all  
 ' things else, they are as much oblig'd to  
 ' live like *Saints*, as the *Religious* are.  
 ' The *Tyes* of *Marriage*, and *Engage-*  
 ' *ments* of the *World*, will never justify  
 ' an idle *Life*; or any way dispense with  
 ' the laborious *Task* of living like a *Chri-*  
 ' *stian*. 'Tis lawful to live in the world;

but

but not, to live according to the Maxims of it. On the contrary; the more we are expos'd to the Temptations of the Devil, so much more we are oblig'd to use our utmost Care and Vigilance.

Believe not, says St. Ibid. Chrysostom, that God

expects from worldly Men a Sanctity quite different from that of Monks. 'Tis true, indeed, that Those may marry, and These may not: But in all things else, the Case is equal. They have Both receiv'd the same Laws, and Both are subject to the same Punishments. When Jesus laid his Curse upon the Rich, and those who lead a jolly life in Sensuality and Pleasure, when he spoke of the Evangelical Beatitudes; He spoke, not only to Religious, but to all the Faithful, and without the least exception. He was never heard to say; that the Religious Man shall suffer for his Sins, but not the Secular. The difference we fancy in this point, is only an Invention of Men; it is not grounded in the word of God, who equally obliges All, that will be sav'd, to keep his Laws. St. Paul, addressing his discourse to married persons, does not He require of them as great a share of Sanctity

Sanctity as we can find in the most perfect Monks? What Disengagement he prescribes to all of us! what Moderation in our Cloaths, our Diet, and our use of Riches! 1 Tim. 6. 8. Having Food, says he, and Rayment, Let us be contented, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. They who are married, Let them be as if they were not: and They who use the World, as if they us'd it not: what more can we expect from those we call Religious? Let us therefore never say, that Worldly Men are either not oblig'd, or else not able to observe the Rules of Christianity; and that Religious only can attain to such sublime Perfection. There is Nothing so pernicious as this false Opinion. It maintains the greatest part of Libertines in their disorders, and encourages imperfect Souls to lead a loose and lazy Life. Assure your selves, Our God requires of All, one self same Sanctity. The Means of our arriving to it, may be different; but yet Religious Persons have no other Aim than we have. They design to save themselves, and so do we. They are not to be sav'd, but by the narrow way; and we shall never be sav'd, by walking in the broad one.

Hence

Hence it follows clearly, that the Gospel being preach'd and made for All, we All are bound to follow it; we All must labour to acquire the Sanctity demanded by it; we must All be thoroughly perswaded, that it is the only way which leads to Heaven, and that every other way is sure to end in everlasting Death. 'Tis true; the Methods and the Exercises which are us'd and follow'd in Religious Houses, to arrive to such Perfection, are quite different from what is usually prescrib'd to Worldly Persons: But their *Virtues* always are the same, although their *Exercises* are not. These two things we commonly confound; to wit, the *Exercises* and the *Virtues* of a Christian. We imagine, for Example, that a *modest* and a *homely Dress* is only fit for Cloisters, where they always wear a certain *Habit*, poor and plain. We fancy that the *Recollection* which is practis'd in Religious Houses, is a thing peculiar to their Character; because we find, that only They have certain Hours allotted them for keeping silence. We imagine also that a *Penitential Life* belongs

belongs to none but them; because  
 They Fast, and practise several Au-  
 sterities commanded by Superiours.  
 'Tis a great mistake. These *Virtues*  
 all are *Evangelical*: We find them in  
 the Gospel, which is *ours* as much as  
*theirs*: They are prescrib'd to *all Men*  
 by the *Common Rule* of Christianity:  
 And, though we have not (as *Religi-*  
*ous* have) so great Advantages to make  
 the practise of them Uniform and Ea-  
 sie: Nevertheless we All are indi-  
 spensably oblig'd to *have* them, and  
 to *practise* them. Our *Modesty*, our  
 Moderation must *be known to All*,  
*Phil. 4. 5.* as well as theirs. Our *Re-*  
*collection* of Mind must be preserv'd a-  
 midst the multitude of our Employ-  
 ments. We are equally oblig'd to  
*Mortify* and Circumcise our Heart,  
 and to Extinguish in it, all our Sensual  
 Desires. The Precept of *Continual*  
*Prayer, Thes. 5. 17.* is as much for us  
 as them. We are not bound to Sing  
 in Choir at certain Hours as they do:  
 but our Heart must be, as much as  
 theirs, *continually united* to our God,  
 by *Loving* of him above all things.  
 Though we have not made a *Vow of*  
*Poverty*; yet we must be, as well as  
 They.

they, entirely *disengag'd* from all the  
*Riches* of the Earth, and never let our  
 Hearts upon them, whilst we use them.  
 Though we have not *own'd* Obedience,  
 we are all oblig'd, as much as they, to  
 be attentive to the Precepts of our  
 Founder *Jesús Christ*, and punctually  
 observe the least of his *Commandments*.  
*Mat. 5. 19.*

Behold the Duty of a Christian! See  
 how generous, how Noble, how He-  
 roical his *Resolution* is, of making good  
 the full Signification of his Name! He  
 meets with an infinity of Obstacles:  
 but notwithstanding all, He is resolv'd  
 to *Sacrifice* and *Save* himself! He is re-  
 solv'd to use all *Violence*, what ever  
 may be requisite, to make his way to  
*Heaven*, and to take it even by force, *Matth.*  
*11. 12.*

## S E C T. II.

### *His Contempt of the World.*

*S. Chry-*  
*ostom.*  
*Hier. 24.*  
*In Ep. ad*  
*Hebr.*  
**H**E always looks upon  
 himself, as a meer  
 Stranger in this World;  
 and the continual Remem-  
 brance of his being so, is  
 the Foundation and Root  
 of all his Virtue. He takes  
 little



little pleasure in employing of his busy thoughts about this Life, and the Affairs relating to it: but is like a banished Man, who lives uneasy in a forreign Country; always looking homeward with extream Impatience, to see the Blessed Place which gave him Birth; and always doing all he can, to lay all things in readiness for his Return. He never is Dejected with Adversity, nor puffed up with Prosperity, which happen to attend his Fortune here; but passes unconcern'dly by, without regarding either; and without the least stop in his way, pursues his journey, like a Traveller, who longs to be at Home, and thinks of nothing else but how to make hast thither. And this is the Reason why our God obliges him to say, in his daily Prayer, *Thy Kingdom come*; that he may always have before his eyes, the happy Day which is to be his Last, and generously scorn to value any transitory Honour, Profit, Pleasure, which he meets with upon Earth.

A Christian, by these noble sentiments of true and solid Wisdom, mounts to such a height above the reach of

S. Chrys.  
from Home  
15. ad Rom.  
pal. 13.  
chap.

all

all this World, that He is hardly capable of feeling, much less of admiring, whatsoever passes in it. He is like a man who from the top of an aspiring Mountain takes a view of all below him, and can hardly see the Towns and Cities, which appear like Molehills; where the numerous Inhabitants, like swarms of Ants, run up and down, and follow eagerly their little Trade of hoarding up a petty Treasure, which is nothing to his purpose. All his *Treasure* and his *Heart* are both in Heaven. There his *Loving Eye* is generally fixt; And if he now and then look down upon the Riches, Glory, Power, Honour, of this miserable World, they all seem trifling matters; All such Things are little, inconsiderable, and contemptible, to Him.

And yet, he cannot justly be accus'd of Pride, because he thinks the wisest Politicians are but *Fools*; their riches, *Shadows*; and all their Pleasures, *Dreams*; and all their Titles, Dignities, and Honours, only *Childrens Baubles*. No; it cannot justly be accounted

counted Pride: 'Tis certainly the greatest Wisdom to *submit* our Judgments, and conform them, to the External Truth of God himself; and judge of things, as they are truly in themselves. Or otherwise we must allow that *Salomon* himself was guilty of Presumption and Arrogance; when, after a full Tryal, after long and sad Experience, He pronounc't that All the World is *Vanity of Vanities, and nothing else but Vanity.*

He labours all he can to make his Soul become a *S. Chry-* Heaven upon Earth; and *ostom.* fails not to succeed in *Hom. 16.* such a noble enterprise. *in Epist.* The Heaven which we *ad Heb.* see, and so admire, is but an Emblem of his Happiness. As Heaven is enlightned by the rising Sun; his Soul is more enlightned by the Grace of God, the Sun of Justice, which arises, without setting, in his Heart. As Heaven always is the same; still beautiful and bright within it self, although the midnight Darkness seem to alter and obscure it; so his Soul is still the same, 'tis always easie and content within it self, although He live obscurely, in disgrace

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 counted

counted Pride: 'Tis certainly the greatest Wisdom to *submit* our Judgments, and conform them, to the External Truth of God himself; and judge of things, as they are truly in themselves. Or otherwise we must allow that *Salomon* himself was guilty of Presumption and Arrogance; when, after a full Tryal, after long and sad Experience, He pronounc't that All the World is *Vanity of Vanities, and nothing else but Vanity.*

He labours all he can, to make his Soul become a *S. Chrysostom.* Heaven upon Earth; and *softom.* fails not to succeed in *Hom. 16.* such a noble enterprise. *in Epist.* The Heaven which we *ad Heb.* see, and so admire, is but an Emblem of his Happiness. As Heaven is enlightned by the rising Sun; his Soul is more enlightned by the Grace of God, the Sun of Justice, which arises, without setting, in his Heart. As Heaven always is the same; still beautiful and bright within it self, although the midnight Darkness seem to alter and obscure it; so his Soul is still the same, 'tis always easie and content within it self, although He live obscurely, in disgrace

'disgrace or poverty, and seem a miserable man to those who little understand the Secret of his Happiness. As Heaven is so high above the Winds and Storms, that the most violent disturbance of the Air can never reach it; so the Soul of a good Christian, even when the World combines to make him suffer most, receives no harm at all. His Treasure is in Heaven, and his Heart is with it. He's above the reach of all that they can do. His Heart is rais'd to such a height, that when he takes a prospect of the Earth below, He sees no difference 'twixt Men and Pismires. Neither are the Poor the only Objects that seem little in his Sight; but Kings themselves, and Generals of Armies, Politicians, Usurers, and what you please, seem every jot as little and contemptible as They. The Difference of Poor and Rich makes no impression upon Him; no more than when he sees, amongst a Swarm of little Pismires, some creep loaded, and others empty.

'What can Men do to such a Man as This, suppose they have a mind to make him miserable?

'Will

' Will they rob him of his money ?  
 ' All his Riches are in Heaven. Will they  
 ' Banish him from home ? He has no  
 ' other Home but Heaven ; and it is not  
 ' in their Power to Banish him from  
 ' thence. Will they lay him fast in Chains ?  
 ' His Conscience will still be free : And,  
 ' for his part, He fears no other Chains  
 ' but those of Sin. Or will they kill  
 ' him ? When they have done this, They  
 ' have no more to Do ; And even then,  
 ' His Soul will Live for ever, his body  
 ' one day rise again.

' A Man, who lives not  
 ' but for Jesus Christ, is *St. Chrys.*  
 ' quite above the reach of *softom.*  
 ' all misfortunes that can *lib. 2. ad*  
 ' threaten him. Provided *Theod.*  
 ' that He will not freely and *lapsum.*  
 ' deliberately hurt himself, *c. 3.*  
 ' No man alive can have  
 ' the least advantage over Him. He's in-  
 ' vincible at all Arms. The Loss of his  
 ' Goods is no Affliction to him, because  
 ' he well considers that we all bring no-  
 ' thing with us at our Birth ; and that  
 ' we all shall carry nothing with us at  
 ' our Death. The vain desires of Repu-  
 ' tation and Honour cannot seize his  
 ' Heart ; because he knows that all  
 our

our Conversation ought to be in Heaven. All the Injuries and Outrages he meets with, are not able to provoke him; he's a Christian: And, being truly such, he fears but one great Danger of one only loss; the danger of offending God, and losing of his Favour; all things else, as Banishment and Poverty, with all the greatest and most dangerous Extremities, he values not at all; and even Death it self, which others think so Terrible, is always most agreeable, most comfortable, and most welcome, whensoe'er it comes.

### S E C T. III.

#### *His Desire of Heaven.*

THE Scripture generally represents a Christian, as a Person disengag'd and separated from the World. If you were of the World, says our Saviour, St. Jo. 15. 19. the World would love his own; but because you are not of the World, and I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hates you. 1 Jo. 2. 15. he loves not the World, nor the things that are in the world. Because, if any man love the world, the Love of God is not



in him. Rom. 12. 2. he is not con-  
form'd to the world, but transform'd by  
the renewing of his Mind, that He may  
prove what is the good the acceptable and  
perfect will of God. 1 Cor. 7. 31. He  
uses the world, as if he us'd it not. Gal. 6.  
14. The world is crucify'd to him, and  
He to the World. Coloss. 3. 3. He is  
Dead, and his Life is hid with Christ in  
God. Jam. 1. 27. His Religion pure and  
undefill'd is that by which he keeps him-  
himself unspotted from the World. 1 Pet.  
2. 11. He abstains from all Desires  
which war against the Soul, because he  
is a Stranger and a Pilgrim in the World.  
But that which most inclines him to  
Desire the Happiness of Heaven, is his  
knowing that, as long as he is here, He's  
Absent from his God. 2. Cor. 5. 6.

' No wonder he so much  
' Desires to be in Heaven. D. Sp.  
' All his Comfort is his Hope. Page 2.  
' of being there. The Gate Ch. 21.  
' so strait; The way so nar-  
' row; The continual Violence so necessa-  
' ry to be us'd; The Cross he daily bears;  
' The Self Denyal which he always  
' practises; Luk. 12. 3. The Penitence  
' without which no All shall perish, if  
' we do not mortify our Passions, curb  
' our

our Humours, and resist our Inclinations: All this, put together, is enough to make a Christians Life, so painful, troublesome, and disagreeable, that 1 Cor. 15. 19. *if in this life only* He had Hope, he would of all Men be most miserable.

'Tis no wonder therefore *Ibid.* he so much Desires the Sight of God, which only can deliver him from all the miseries he labours under. Ch. 22. 'Tis the great Affliction of the Just; to see themselves so far from *Sion*, separated from their God, and banisht from their Heavenly Jerusalem. Although the Riches of the World were all their Own, They still would think themselves Unfortunate, because their Treasure is not here; 'tis only to be found *hereafter*. They as earnestly Desire the Happiness of Heaven, as a Hart long hunted thirsts for Water. 'Tis a Duty indispensably incumbent upon all true Christians to Desire is above All Things.

Hear S. Austin. He who finds himself at Base on Earth; who is contented to live always Here; and finds his greatest Joy and Satisfaction in this world; will never

§ 3. A Good Christian.

‘never enter Heaven. If you ask the  
‘Reason; He replys: because He has  
‘not in his Heart the Love of God, who-  
‘ever does not Sigh, and above all things  
‘Wish, for the enjoyment of Eternal Life,  
‘Examine well your Heart. If God should  
‘promise you a long Life upon Earth; and  
‘tell you: You shall here enjoy whatever  
‘you can wish for; Riches, Pleasures, Ho-  
‘nours, Health, Prosperity, and what you  
‘please besides, shall every where attend  
‘you Only, You shall never See me; You  
‘shall never have a Share with Me in  
‘Heaven: would you be Content? whoe-  
‘ver is in such a Disposition, does not yet  
‘begin to Love Him Above all Things.

‘Hear the Royal Prophet:

‘Hear the Language of his *Ibid.*  
‘Love. As the Hart pants *Ch. 22.*  
‘after water, so my Soul pants  
‘after Thee, My God. *Psal. 42. 1, 2, 3.* My  
‘Soul is thirsty for Thee, O Thou living  
‘God, the only Life and Comfort of  
‘my Soul. My Tears have been my En-  
‘tertainment Day and Night; and tis  
‘the only Ease of my impatient Grief,  
‘to have the Liberty of weeping in thy  
‘Absence. When shalt I appear before my  
‘God? When once that happy Day ap-  
‘proaches, when I once Behold thy Face,

*I shall be satisfied: Pl. 17. 15. but never shall be satisfied till then. 'Tis this, and only this One Thing I always have Desir'd of Thee; that I may Dwell in thy House for ever, and behold thy Beauty. Pl. 27. 4.*

*All God's Children say the Ibid. 'same: they daily pray to their 'Eternal Father, that his King-  
'dome come: And their Desire of E-  
'verlasting Life, though sometimes out  
'of Mind) is always in their Heart. By  
'this, they Pray incessantly. By this,  
'they are attentive to God's Presence,  
'in the midst of those Employments and  
'Affairs, which otherwise would easily  
'divert them from the Thought of him.  
'By This, they frequently Recal their  
'wandering Thoughts, Renew their de-  
'caying Fervour, Enflame their cool-  
'ing Love, Encourage their despond-  
'ing Hearts, and March a great deal  
'faster towards Heaven. When the  
'Scripture commands us, says S. Au-  
'stin, to Pray Always; we are not there-  
'fore oblig'd to be always on our knees,  
'or always singing Psalms in Choirs:  
'we only are oblig'd to have continually,  
'in the Bottom of our Heart, a true De-  
'sire to leave this Earth and enter into  
'Hea-*

Heaven. This continual Desire must still  
 persevere in our Heart. We always must  
 lament, and sigh; and say; I am a Captive  
 and a Pilgrim; I am far from Home;  
 I am not with my God. 'Tis true, (S. Au-  
 stin adds,) a Just Man may divert him-  
 self sometimes; and spend some hours,  
 in such employments as appear quite  
 different from Gaining Heaven.  
 'Tis, alas! the Servitude of his Cap-  
 tivity, which thus obliges him to  
 work for the Egyptians, whilst he is  
 a Slave to Pharaoh. But howe-  
 ver in the midst of all his Slavery,  
 He never can forget the Land of  
 Promise; He laments, He sighs, He  
 always wishes to be There: And  
 Thus He always Prays to God that  
 He will please to grant him the  
 Possession of that Sovereign Good,  
 which only can Suffice to make Him  
 truly and for ever Happy.

F I N I S.

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Visâ Approbatione Eximii ac Peril-  
 lustris Domini, \*\*\* Presbyteri,  
 S. Theologiæ Doctoris, \*\*\* approbo ego  
 Librum Anglicano Idiomate compositum,  
 cui

*enititulus est, A Contrite and Humble Heart,  
With Motives and Considerations to prepare  
it. D. D. 16. Martii. 1693.*

*N. J. DE LA V. S. T.  
Doctor & Prof. Prim.  
Litr. Visiutor & Censor,  
& pro temp. V. D. Rector.*

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